LOVE IN YOUTH

FRANK HARRIS

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BY

FRANK HARRIS

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CHAPTER I

Time: A May morning in 19—.

Place: A bedroom in the Hotel de Paris, Monte Carlo.

A young American, Morton Bancroft, in bed; his thoughts on waking:

"Joy and depression—contradictory feelings. Why? Let's have the depression first.

"I gambled last night for the last time, and lost nearly all I had. Played quite coolly, according to the system, and lost practically everything. System no good, as I had already guessed. Just before the rooms closed I had a run of luck, and won back ten thousand dollars, which I resolved to put aside for emergencies and forget all about—a grain of prudence in my recklessness . . . .

"So here I am, without a cent; that is, after I pay the bill in this hotel, I shall have perhaps fifty pounds, and no more.

"What does it matter? Now I'm awake the depression has vanished. I'm glad of the experience, not sorry. Another glorious day! warm sunshine streaming in at the window, and high up the square of forget-me-not-blue

sky, and against it that one feathery acacia branch, with its fragrant white blossom, like a girl's skin.

"What time is it?" (Looks at his watch.) "Seven o'clock all but ten minutes. Well, I'm very comfortable, so I'll take the ten minutes to make up my debtor and creditor account, and see how I stand. Nearly twenty-seven years old, five feet ten in height, strong figure, ugly face; well educated, or can pass for it. Went through the State University at Lawrence, Kansas, the old school on the hill. Became Rhodes scholar because I wanted to see Europe, spent three years at Balliol, Oxford, in a sort of post-graduate course. What have I learned? To read Greek and Latin easily, and, in the three years since my father's death, I have wandered about the continent, and learned some German, French, and Italian, plus a smattering of literature and art—just enough to know that I know very little. A start, and no more, and life waiting for me . . . .

"What do I possess? The nest-egg in background, in pocket fifty pounds, and one Lancia landaulette, forty horse-power, which I drive myself, and know all about, from carburetor to differential, and don't intend to part with. But my real possessions are perfect health, some will power, some brains, and, above all, intense joy in living, and a wild thirst for life. It seems to me I could do anything, learn anything, I mean, master anything, win all the races, kiss all the girls.

"Am I an ass to have lost my fortune at this fool game? No. Why did I do it? Many reasons. I

wanted to see if I could win. I didn't believe I could. I didn't believe anybody could. Why did I try? Because I hadn't money enough to do any good, only enough to postpone the need of making up my mind to do something. Forty thousand dollars isn't much when one has vast ambitions. Each year I spent double the interest . . . I didn't know what to do: I don't know now; but now I'll have to find out right away. Am I to go into business, be a lawyer, or doctor, or writer?

"Had I been satisfied to write, and nothing more, the forty thousand dollars would have been a help. But I wanted to live first and write afterward, so I said to myself, I'll either double it or lose it. If I lose it I'll go back to New York and see how long it'll take me to make a hundred thousand dollars. That's the minimum on which a man to-day can live a decent, self-respecting life. I'm not afraid of being able to win it. When I left my father on the farm and went to the University against his will, I paid my own way and found out just how hard the world is, and just how easy it is to beat it if you make up your mind. I'm not afraid of the money side of life.

"What am I afraid of? Nothing. My pitfall is women. If I fall in love I may commit any stupidity, and I want to fall in love all the time. A pretty face appeals to me intensely, and they are nearly all pretty if you get close enough to kiss them. That's the difficulty. I'm resolved not to fall in love really with any girl who

is not perfection. I oughtn't to marry till I have done something big. I shall flirt as much as I can. I want to know women: they are very difficult to know at first, and, afterward, if they like you, they're very simple. But no serious flirtation yet awhile, for, when I take the fever really, I shall take it badly, I know. It won't matter to me whether she's rich or poor, but if she has beauty and charm, and elements of greatness in her, my God! how I shall love her! . . . I don't want your ordinary woman. She'd bore me to death. . . .

"Now my ten minutes are up, and I had better have my bath and breakfast, and then—what am I to do? I must act now. Let me think first . . . .

"It was Victor Rossall and his silly book got me to gamble. I wonder could Rossall get me a party to take up in my car to Paris? I want to go through the lower Alps and that exquisite Dauphiné once again before I return home to work. I want a holiday amid beautiful scenes, in order to cleanse myself of this foolish, foul Monte Carlo and its idiotic gambling.

"It's hot enough for flannels: Rossall won't be in till half-past ten or eleven; I'll just pull on bags and a sweater, and go for a run up the hill, as far as the Riviera Palace, then bath, and breakfast, a look at the papers, and I'll go to find him." (Jumps out of bed.)

* * * * * * * * *

The Hon. Victor Rossall, Lord Restbury's brother, a man about forty-five, and Morton Bancroft, at one o'clock at lunch on the Terrace at Ciro's.

Victor Rossall: What I can't make out is how you look so well. I'm fuzzy-headed and copper-mouthed, after the dinner last night, and the play at the club. You gambled, too, and I expect lost money like the rest of them, and yet you turn up fresh as paint! How d'ye do it?

Morton Bancroft: Simply enough. I went to bed at twelve, and sprinted up to the Riviera Palace this morning in sweaters, came back, had breakfast, and have walked about the Terrace in the sunshine and fresh air ever since, waiting for you. You've been stuffed away in that bank of yours. . . . I hope you'll like the lunch—I copied you in ordering it, you know.

Victor Rossall: Oh, you can't do better than *Mostelle à l'Anglaise.* It's about the best fish on the Riviera: and this Montrachet is very good, though of a morning I prefer a light Moselle. After forty I notice one likes everything light. (Yawns.)

Morton Bancroft: I think the Mostelle wonderful! It's the only place in the world you find it, isn't it?

Victor Rossall: The only place. But the little soles here that they call *'langues d'avocat'* are very sweet, and their *friture* of little red mullet beats our whitebait hollow. Of course all fish should be cooked in olive oil. It's the Jew way, and they know something about living.

Morton Bancroft: You'd have laughed at my lunch yesterday. I trotted up to La Turbie, and then walked to Nice by the upper Corniche. I did the sixteen miles

in about three hours, and went for lunch in the old town. It cost me two francs fifty; I had some fresh sardines, because they were ready, and a piece of cheese and a hunk of bread, washed down with a little white wine of the country—they called it *clairette*. I thought it excellent, though no doubt you'd turn up your nose at it. The chief pleasure of living's in being fit, I think.

Victor Rossall: Hum! How did you get on at the tables last night—do any good?

Morton Bancroft: Thanks to your system, I had the worst time of my life. I lost a lot.

Victor Rossall: (Looking at him curiously; his expression suddenly grown cautious.) How could you be such a duffer? Everyone loses at Monte in the long run.

Morton Bancroft: Why did you say in your book that one had nearly even chances?

Victor Rossall: It's true; you have. You lose one stake in a hundred—that's not much.

Morton Bancroft: Isn't it, indeed! It just makes all the difference. There's no chance in the game whatever. Zero is a certainty, and all Monte Carlo's built on it. It should be called Monte Zero.

Victor Rossall (indifferently, but still with the wary look in his eyes): You think the zero and *refait* make all the difference, do you?

Morton Bancroft: Surely!

Victor Rossall: Well, I'm not sure: but the mathematical people all agree with you—the Hiram Maxims, and that lot. And they generally come out on top in

life, I notice. What interests me is that most of the really wealthy people never play at all.

Morton Bancroft: They know their own game is a better one, I suppose; that's the reason.

Victor Rossall: These lamb cutlets are very good, but the cook has spoilt the peas. None of these Frenchmen will ever put sugar in peas. In the boiling the natural sugar is stewed out of the peas; you ought to put some sugar with them, or else they're tasteless. I must speak to Ciro about it.

Morton Bancroft (laughing): What an epicure you are! You ought really to be a professor of cooking at some university.

Victor Rossall: When you come to my age, my dear boy, you'll understand that there's no pleasure in life that can be reckoned on so surely as eating. A good lunch is a good thing, and a good dinner is a better. But you're in such tip-top spirits that I suppose you didn't lose enough to matter?

Morton Bancroft (cheerfully): Every stiver! You see, your book said that one had fairly equal chances of doubling one's money or losing it, and that one ought to be able to win. Well, I tried it. I almost doubled my money once. I got my eight thousand pounds up to twelve.

Victor Rossall: Why didn't you stop then?

Morton Bancroft: How does one know when to stop? At any rate, I went back yesterday and lost it all. In the last hour last night I won enough to pay my hotel

bill, and a bit over. Now (he went on laughing), as you were the prime cause of my ruin with your wretched book, I think you ought to do a little to help me.

Victor Rossall (coldly): I'd be delighted, I'm sure, but I've no power, you know—none whatever; a younger brother!

Morton Bancroft (laughing): I don't mean help in that way! I shall never go to my friends for money in this world—I'll go to my enemies, or the indifferent. But I've got my Lancia car, and I was wondering whether I could put it to some use. You meet everybody. Don't you know someone who wants to be taken up through France in a motor-car? If you do, I wish you'd recommend me. You've been out with me; you know I'm a good chauffeur, and I know France, from Nice to Calais, as well as the next man.

Victor Rossall (his face clearing): Of course, my dear fellow. I'll do my best. People often come into the bank and ask about cars, and you're a great driver. Let me see—by the way, Foxwell—do you know him? (Morton Bancroft shakes his head.) The very man—a countryman of yours, too—a millionaire; sharp, but very nice, I think; keeps racehorses, I suppose at Chantilly. He came in yesterday, wanted to know whether he could get a good car to go to Paris by road. He might take you on; I told him that the difficulty was in getting a good chauffeur. He doesn't speak much French, and English chauffeurs who are any good are not to be found in Monte Carlo. This place would corrupt a

saint. I'll see him and let you know. By the way, they say his daughter is very pretty, and, if she's like old mother Foxwell, she must be a bit out of the common. But I say, you are doing me well! These strawberries are a dream! How much better sun-ripened strawberries are than those forced, watery things.

Morton Bancroft: Let me hear about Foxwell, will you, and put in a good word for me? I really know my job. What would be the good of his buying a car just to go to Paris? He'd have to sell it again, and would lose on it. Make that plain to him.

Victor Rossall: I won't forget, but I don't think he'd mind the money much. You know who he is, don't you? *The* Foxwell, the great speculator. They tell a good story about him on the New York Stock Exchange—it went all over the world. He was caught in a wheat corner, and nearly ruined. Some reporter called on him and said, "We hear, Mr. Foxwell, the corner is bust, and you're broke."

"Not broke," he replied; "a little bent, perhaps." Pretty good, eh?

Morton Bancroft (laughing): Very good, indeed! A tough man. I hope we'll hit it off.

Victor Rossall: Be in the tea-room of the Paris this afternoon, about four, will you? He's to come in after lunch and see me, and then I'll sing your praises, you may be sure. Such a lunch would put anyone in voice. Ha! ha! ha!

CHAPTER II

THE same afternoon Morton Bancroft was standing near the door of the tea-room at the Hotel de Paris, when he noticed a little man quietly dressed in gray coming across the square toward the hotel with quick steps.

"I wonder is that the millionaire?" said Bancroft to himself. "I should not be surprised. His clothes are a little too well made for an Englishman's, and he comes here in a bee-line—intent on business: clean shaven, too, —surely American. He looks very young—has had no cares, I suppose."

The next moment the man in gray walked up the stairs into the room and looked about him. As his eyes fell on Bancroft they took him in quietly; then the man came across to him.

"Mr. Bancroft, I think?"

"That's my name," said Bancroft, smiling. "You're Mr. Foxwell?"

"Sure. Shall we sit at a table here and have our talk?"

Bancroft bowed and followed Mr. Foxwell to a table a little apart, near the broad window which looks on the *place* before the Casino. Mr. Foxwell did not seem to

be in a hurry to speak: while he was putting his hat and gloves together on another seat, Bancroft studied him.

"A sturdy, strong man," he said to himself, "with a well-shaped head." Then he remarked the bony chin, and hard, clamping jaws. The next moment keen, hazel eyes were on his, and he pulled himself together.

"Would you like anything to drink, or smoke?"

"Nothing, thank you," Bancroft answered.

"Mr. Victor Rossall, of the bank, has told me about you," Mr. Foxwell began. "He recommends you in the highest way, both as chauffeur and gentleman. To speak frankly, I was a little doubtful about the combination. The gentleman of good education, who loses all his money gambling, and drops at once to being a chauffeur, doesn't appeal to me. I don't want to be offensive, but facts are facts, and Mr. Rossall doesn't perhaps see them as I do."

Morton Bancroft smiled. "If I meant to continue being a chauffeur, you'd be right. The truth is, I'm not quite decided yet about what I'm going to do, and, in the meantime, I prefer to earn my way to Paris while making up my mind. I shall probably go straight back to New York or settle down to write in Paris."

"I see," said Mr. Foxwell, scanning him curiously. "Why did you throw all your money down this enameled sink?"

"I had only enough to make it easy for me to loaf, and not enough to live on, as I want to live."

Feeling that the hard eyes were still hard, Bancroft

added: "Besides, I didn't lose it all; I kept a bit back for a start."

The brown eyes suddenly glinted, and little wrinkles came round them. Mr. Foxwell leaned back in his chair, relaxing.

"I see, I see!" he said pleasantly.

Bancroft noticed that now his face was relaxed many little lines appeared in it. "He must be a man of fifty-five," he said to himself, "or even more, who has always taken good care of himself."

"I guess you've not done much harm," Mr. Foxwell resumed; "and I'm glad of it. I hate a man to make a fool of himself. But now, as I have questioned you, I want to tell you about us, so that you'll know just what you're up against. My wife's an invalid—not really ill, you know, but not strong—always ailing a little. My daughter Jenny thought it would do us all good to have a car here and go to Paris in it. She doesn't like the train, and she thinks France might be worth seeing. And whatever Jenny wants, goes, d'ye see?"

Bancroft nodded. Foxwell's face had suddenly become an iron mask again.

"Whatever she wishes I try to make good. She's our only child, and we want to make her happy, and the world pleasant to her. I had rather a hard time of it when I was young; perhaps that's why I want her to have a good time." The eyes grew kindly again. "I came to see you first. I'll tell Jenny and my wife, and I've no doubt Jenny'll want to try your car."

"Thank you," said Bancroft a little excited, and taking out a card he added: "I'm staying here, and that's my room number, if you wish to send me a note. Five minutes after getting it I'll be anywhere you like in Monte Carlo. Do you wish me to stay in the hotel till I hear from you?"

"I guess there's no need of that," Mr. Foxwell replied. "We're at the Riviera Palace. If you're in here, anywhere round seven o'clock, I'll send a note to say what our plans are. Now, about the price, Mr. Bancroft? I want an inclusive sum per day, so that any day I can hand you the amount and end the contract. Of course, if we resolve on taking you through to Paris, the trip will be for the time necessary to go to Paris—perhaps a month or more. That's as Jenny and Mrs. Foxwell may determine. But for the present we'll take it by the day, please."

"The price usually depends, I believe, upon the distance you go," Bancroft answered. "It's about a franc a kilometer."

"No, no!" said Mr. Foxwell, abruptly. "I don't want anything of that sort. My wife's not very strong, but, if we wish to go far, we'll go far, or stay at home, as the ladies may decide. I want a price that'll include everything."

Bancroft hesitated. Suddenly Mr. Foxwell smiled:

"You're not a business man, Mr. Bancroft, or you'd already have made up your mind exactly the utmost you could get. Let me help you. Suppose we say fifty dol-

lars, that's roughly two hundred and sixty francs a day. I don't suppose we shall often go two hundred and fifty kilometers, or half of it."

"Oh!" said Bancroft, light-heartedly, "I'm sure that will be enough, thank you. It was, indeed, more than I had expected."

"You must not say those things, you know," said Mr. Foxwell seriously; "if you are out to be a business man you must get all you can and wish you had a bit more. That's the true spirit," and again he smiled. "Will you have anything to drink now? It doesn't seem as if we were very good customers to the house."

"Nothing, thank you," said Bancroft. "I don't drink between meals."

"I guess you do more walking and running," said Mr. Foxwell, "to look at you."

Bancroft nodded, laughing. "I think I do."

"So long, then," said Mr. Foxwell abruptly, taking up his hat and gloves. "So long!" And, without offering his hand, turned, and walked quickly out of the room.

"I like him," said Bancroft to himself. "The face is hard, but the eyes and mouth are kindly. I wonder what that long, thin nose of his means? Some people say the nose is the rudder of the face, the governing will-power of the man. It may be—I'll have to notice. But now I must go and see that the car is ready. Two hundred and sixty francs a day ought to mean easily a hundred francs a day profit. Very good pay for the ordinary chauffeur; not very good for me. Still, better than

nothing. I must pay my bill and get furnished rooms for the next few days: I can still call for my letters here."

He picked up his hat and went out to make the necessary arrangements.

In an hour he had overhauled his car, and told his mechanic that he would continue paying him the five francs a day for washing and cleaning, but the car must now be ready at any moment.

"By the by, Lacloche," said Bancroft to his mechanic in French, as he was on the point of going, "do you know where one could find decent rooms, cheap—furnished rooms, with breakfast?"

Lacloche's eyebrows and shoulders went up. "I live in the old town, off the Condamine, but Monsieur would not like that. Along there"—and he pointed to the top of the Gardens—"Monsieur would get what he wants very quickly."

Nodding to him cheerfully Bancroft turned and went up the hill. In ten minutes he had found a sitting-room and bedroom, fairly furnished, in a *maison meublée,* just by the Crédit Lyonnais. It was as quiet as one could hope to get in Monte Carlo, and quite decent; the cost was only ten francs a day, with *le petit déjeuner*—coffee and a roll—in the morning.

In an hour or so he had got his things over from the hotel, and arranged them, and was fairly comfortable. At half-past five, having finished everything, he went out for a walk, right up the hill among the olive trees. At

seven he was back in the Hotel de Paris, and found a note awaiting him. It was from Mr. Foxwell:

"Dear Sir,

"Nothing doing to-night. Please be in front of the Paris, toward the Monaco side, to-morrow morning at eleven o'clock, and show Luigi, the porter, your car, so that Miss Foxwell may be able to find it at once when she wants it.

"Yours,

"Henry J. Foxwell."

"I was right, then," said Bancroft to himself; "the omitting to shake hands with me when he went away last night was simply to mark I was his chauffeur. That's why he says 'Dear Sir' to me now, and 'Miss Foxwell,' and wastes no civilities. He needn't be afraid. I'm not apt to presume. I'll just write and thank Rossall, and then I'll put in a good evening's reading."

* * * * * * * * *

The next morning, dressed in dark blue, with a chauffeur's peaked cap, he was with his car in front of the Hotel de Paris at a quarter to eleven. Finding the police regulations prevented him staying there, he told Luigi where he would be, and slipped on down the hill about a hundred yards, and stopped just before getting to the post-office, where he had a view over Monaco and the sea. At eleven precisely he left the car and went back to the hotel, to remind Luigi of his whereabouts, and to

give him five francs to quicken zeal. Then he returned to his car. At first he waited in eager expectancy, but nothing happened, nobody came near him. People passed by from the terrace to go to lunch; the place grew more and more deserted. Could there be any mistake, he began to ask himself, and finally ran back to the Paris again to question Luigi. Luigi was yawning; he had just had his lunch. There was nothing to do, the sun was beating down hotly, the air was warm, and he was drowsy.

"Have you seen Miss Foxwell?" began Bancroft.

"She's in there, lunching with a party," replied Luigi, pointing to the restaurant side of the hotel.

"Do you think I might go and have my lunch?"

"I don't know," warned Luigi. "She may be out any time."

"Well, I'm down there near the post-office."

"C'est bien, c'est bien!" said Luigi; "I'll send to tell you as soon as she comes out."

An hour later she had not come. Bancroft managed to get a glass of beer and a sandwich, and ate it by his motor.

"Waiting like this is devilish," he said to himself. "I had no idea it could be such a strain. I suppose it isn't a strain to the ordinary servant, that's why they're not keen, as I've always thought they should be. They have had to wait so often that all keenness goes out of them. I don't wonder at it . . . I suppose it's a good experience for me to wait about like this. But I'm sure

it isn't a good thing for Miss Foxwell to be so careless of other people's feelings. I'll bet she's conceited, probably as hard as her father."

With thoughts like these in his head he walked up and down by the car, always on the alert, but nothing happened.

The afternoon began to wear away. It was near four o'clock before he returned to Luigi.

"She's gone out," said Luigi. "I asked her did she want her car; she said 'No.' She's gone with her party, so perhaps she'll be in to tea."

"If you can," said Bancroft, "ask her when she'll want the car?"

"I'll try," replied Luigi, "but she has a way of looking at you and not answering," and he made an expressive gesture.

"So long as you tell her I'm here," said Bancroft, "that's all I want."

"C'est bien, c'est bien," nodded Luigi, and again Bancroft returned to his car.

He had now made up his mind to be patient. "After all," he remarked to himself, "I ought to be able to occupy myself with my thoughts, and so wait more easily than any ordinary servant. It isn't bad to stand here and look at that scene, and earn five dollars an hour."

But, in spite of himself, after a little while his thoughts went back to the girl.

"She must be a curious creature," he thought, "to

keep a man waiting here through lunch time and into the afternoon without sending him word. But perhaps she expects one to have lunch. . . . She's a beauty, Rossall says, so I suppose she'll give herself airs. After all, good looks are better than bad, though they can't matter much to me. . . . The father's a strange mixture—thinks himself a little tin god; judges men offhand. No wonder he made such a reputation on the New York Stock Exchange! What a modern device, that saying of his: 'Bent, not broke!'

"Fancy losing millions coolly and beginning all over again. An indomitable man. I wonder could I paint him in words. I don't know him well enough yet. But he's interesting—a little puzzling to tell where his hardness ends and his kindness begins. I daresay the harder a man is to the outside world the kinder he is to his own people. That seems true of the Jews; all outcasts show it, I expect. . . ."

The afternoon wore away; slowly the sun slipped down behind the promontory of Monaco. For quarter of an hour the *Tête de Chien* glowed in the sunset, then it grew gray and chilly. Bancroft tramped up and down briskly.

At seven o'clock he went up to the hotel, but Luigi could tell him nothing. Miss Foxwell hadn't come in; she was probably dining with friends. Should he 'phone the Riviera Palace?

"Perhaps it would be as well," said Bancroft; "if she's there, ask her if she wishes the chauffeur to come up to the hotel or to meet her anywhere."

With the ready civility of the Italian, Luigi did what he was told, but soon returned with the message that Miss Foxwell was not in.

Bancroft went back slowly to his car.

At eight o'clock he returned again to the hotel, but Luigi could tell him nothing. At nine o'clock he went back again. The diners had all gone across to the rooms. Again Luigi 'phoned the Riviera Palace, but could hear nothing except that Miss Foxwell hadn't been in.

"She has forgotten you," said Luigi. "If I were in your place I'd put the car away, have my dinner, and come around in the morning."

Bancroft hesitated. He was a little obstinate by nature, and didn't like going away, but the position was new to him, and perhaps Luigi knew best. Still, he would wait, he resolved, till after eleven o'clock, when the rooms closed, and then, if he had no message, he'd take the car to the garage and go to his rooms. He told this to Luigi, who shrugged his shoulders indifferently. He was already beginning to think of Bancroft as a chauffeur, and not as a person staying at the hotel.

About a quarter past eleven the crowd of players had dispersed, the motors had all disappeared. It was deep night, and Bancroft thought it was time to get something to eat. He took the car to the garage, feeling that he had been hardly treated, and yet irritated with the consciousness that perhaps he ought to have stayed on till midnight.

"What strange people," he thought. "Less considerate than the English. Some of the feudal feeling still lingers in England; servants are a part of the household. In America they are looked upon as mere employees. It makes life harder and less agreeable; but it doesn't concern me much."

With a kinder word than usual to his mechanic, he went to his rooms, and read, and then to bed.

The next morning at nine o'clock he called at the Paris. There was nothing for him. Using his previous day's order as a guide, he drove his car at eleven o'clock past the hotel, and took up his position as he had done the day before, after telling Luigi where he was. About half-past eleven he strolled up to the Paris, and Luigi gave him a letter which had just come for him. He thanked him and tore it open casually. A check fluttered to the ground. He picked it up and looked at it—it was for five hundred and twenty francs. His face was hot with indignation before he had read the letter:

"Dear Sir:

"Miss Foxwell tried to find you at half-past eleven last night, but Luigi said you had gone home, after waiting all day. I'm sorry, but our plans have altered a little, so I send you the enclosed check as agreed, to terminate engagement.

"Yours truly,

"Henry J. Foxwell."

Anger blazed in Bancroft, but outwardly he gave no sign. He smiled, nodding to Luigi, and walked out of the hotel in a temper:

"What disgraceful people! What a girl! Did she expect me to wait all night without a word? How was I to know? They told me to communicate with Luigi, and I did what Luigi advised me to do. The father's kindness goes as far as—'I'm sorry'—damn him! and the girl—what a cat she must be. Damn them all! I'll not think any more about them. After all, I'm not much worse off. Of course, I shan't keep the check. I've lost the whole day and got a good lesson. If I had only thought of asking the father how long I was to wait the whole trouble might have been avoided. . . .

"I've not got the habit of service," he concluded, trying to laugh, but deep down in him there was revolt against such inconsiderate tyranny. "Suppose it had mattered to me?" he said, "suppose I had been the ordinary chauffeur?" And then he had to reflect that the ordinary chauffeur would not have shared his anger because he would have been slowly drilled into the acceptance of servitude. He shrugged his shoulders and drove the car back to the garage, and then went into the Paris and wrote the following letter to Mr. Foxwell:

"Dear Sir:

"You told me to be with my car at eleven o'clock outside the Paris, and tell Luigi where I was, so that Miss Foxwell could find me easily. Luigi told me to go home

ten hours later. I waited till the rooms were closed, till after eleven o'clock, without lunch or dinner, and then took his advice. If I ought to have waited longer I, too, am sorry; it was inexperience. But, under the circumstances, I cannot accept your check. I have not earned it, so I return it canceled. With regret that Miss Foxwell was inconvenienced,

"I remain,

"Yours truly,

"MORTON BANCROFT."

He took this letter up and left it himself at the Riviera Palace, and then came down and had lunch in a little Italian gargotte, frequented by cartmen and masons. After lunch, he went down to the Paris on his way to Smith's Bank to see Rossall. As he passed the Paris Luigi came out and called him.

"Telephone message for you," he said, and handed him a penciled note. It was simply to say that Mr. Foxwell would call at the Paris at four o'clock, hoping to see Mr. Bancroft.

"What did it mean?" Bancroft asked himself. He smiled at Luigi, and turned down the hill to think. What could it mean? Would Mr. Foxwell try to make him take the check, or would he reëngage him, or what? He soon realized that he didn't know the man well enough to guess what would happen. He would, of course, meet him and see. Should he be conciliatory or not? Conciliatory! He'd like to hear what they had to

say. There might be some explanation. Miss Foxwell might well have been annoyed at finding no car to take her to her hotel. He ought to have waited till midnight. His own tenacity of purpose made him excuse them.

At four o'clock he was in the tea room of the Paris when Mr. Foxwell came in. This time the American simply motioned to the table and took his seat. Bancroft seated himself opposite.

"I told you I was sorry," said Mr. Foxwell very deliberately. "That was true. Your letter showed, too, that there was a misunderstanding. As soon as Miss Foxwell heard that you had been there all day, without food, she felt that it was a mistake. That was not our intention. Of course, we thought you'd have your meals in the usual way."

"You see," said Bancroft, smiling, "it was my first job, and I didn't understand. I was quite willing to wait, but Luigi persuaded me that Miss Foxwell had simply forgotten all about me."

"Well," said Mr. Foxwell, "twelve hours is a pretty good wait—there's no doubt about that. All I can say is, we're sorry, and if you want to go on again, why, I'm willing."

"All right," said Bancroft, "but I want you to take it for granted that I hold myself bound to do what you wish if you only make it plain to me what it is. My car and myself are at your entire disposal. I have need of food; but I don't object to waiting any number of hours."

"Then keep right on," said Mr. Foxwell pleasantly. "I guess things are apt to come hardest at first, but there's no malice, is there?"—and his sharp eyes probed the young man for a moment.

"Not a bit," replied Bancroft, smiling.

"That's good!" said Mr. Foxwell; "then you'll be at the same place to-morrow at eleven. When you go to lunch or dinner, you'll leave word where you are."

"Surely," said Bancroft.

When Mr. Foxwell rose, Bancroft rose too, and drew back bowing. Mr. Foxwell just bent his head and walked out of the room. Looking after him Bancroft asked himself whether he had told the entire truth in saying there was no malice. To the father he bore none, not a trace; but for some reason or other he judged the girl very much more harshly.

"Why do I?" he asked himself. "We expect more kindness, more consideration from a woman. But we have no right to, no reason. Yes, we have," his intuition insisted. "We can pardon faults of harshness in a man which we can't pardon in a woman, just as we can pardon weakness and cowardice in a woman we can't pardon in a man. Miss Foxwell is rather a poor thing," he decided.

But at the bottom of him there was a certain satisfaction in having kept his job, a certain curiosity, too, to know the girl who could be so hard and peremptory.

"What's she like, I wonder?" he asked himself.

CHAPTER III

NEXT morning at eleven Bancroft was at his post. The day happened to be cloudy, and looked like rain. One of the *cochers de fiacre* whom he spoke to, told him he didn't think it would rain that day, but probably in the night.

About half-past twelve, no one having come, Bancroft left his car in charge of a boy and went down the hill to a little Monegasque restaurant to have his lunch. He had already found out that the people of the country know the best and cheapest places. In an hour he had returned to his car. He had brought a book with him to while away the waiting. It was the sketch Stendhal began of the life of Napoleon. Sitting in his seat he read it the whole afternoon. At half-past six he went and had his dinner, leaving the boy again in possession, and, after he returned, he simply turned on the electric light and sat inside the car reading till midnight. When the clock struck he got out to walk a little and stretch his legs; he could not help laughing.

"She's determined to exercise my patience," he thought to himself, "or is she insane? Still, the person who pays the piper calls the tune."

About half-past twelve, as it began to drizzle, he got

into the car, turned up the light again, and went on reading Stendhal. He found it a fascinating book, for Stendhal seemed to know Napoleon, and was big enough to measure him fairly.

About three o'clock in the morning he had finished the book and no one had come, so, leaving the light on, he curled up in the corner of the car and tried to go to sleep. But in vain. Whether it was the waiting, or the unaccustomed position, he could not sleep. His thoughts played about what he had been reading; he took the book out again and began marking passages in it that seemed to him important. He realized now that Stendhal had given no portrait of Napoleon at all. He evidently hadn't known him well enough to be able to picture him. Certain of his weaknesses as a general he saw very clearly; saw, for example, that he was far greater in victory than in defeat, saw that it was the palmary weakness of Napoleon never to take the lesson of any failure to heart.

Again and again Bancroft felt sleepy, and put the book down, but as soon as he closed his eyes he became acutely wakeful and naturally enough his thoughts went to the Foxwells. Was this a test of theirs to leave him here all day and all night, or was it merely the carelessness of people who had no consideration for others, or was it, again, some misunderstanding? The father, he thought, was rather like Napoleon: very quick and keen and resolute. What could the girl be like?

About four o'clock the rain had ceased and the sky

began to lighten. Bancroft got out of the car, walked up and down for half an hour or so, feeling a little stale, a little irritable, too, perhaps, for want of sleep. At five o'clock it was completely light, and the pavement was already drying. He decided to wait till six, and, curiously enough, just at six a *sergent de ville* came and told him he was not allowed to station there the whole night. He talked to the man pleasantly for a moment or two, and then ran his car to the garage and left word that he would be back in an hour.

An hour later, having bathed and breakfasted, he came back, and, finding his car cleaned and ready, took it down again to the appointed place and resumed his waiting. This time he had brought a new book with him, an American book that had not long been out, a book by David Graham Phillips, an author as yet unknown to him—*"The Adventures of Joshua Craig."* He read it with increasing interest, and when, about eleven o'clock, he had finished it, he told himself he would get all the other books by the same author.

About half-past twelve he was wondering whether he should go to lunch at once when he saw Luigi coming toward him with a lady.

"It must be Miss Foxwell," he said to himself. "She's young, and seems in a hurry." His pulses beat in excitement; he scanned her curiously as she came toward him. At first sight he was rather disappointed. He had expected a beauty, and Miss Foxwell seemed to be merely pretty. He had just time to think that, in a girl

who was a great heiress, prettiness might well be called beauty, when she stopped in front of him and, with one rapid glance at him, said:

"How long will it take you to get to the Reserve at Beaulieu?"

Lifting his hat, he replied: "Quarter of an hour, Miss Foxwell."

The girl glanced at a watch on her wrist, frowning, and exclaimed:

"I've only ten minutes. It's not more than four miles, is it?"

"Quite six," he replied, "and the road winds a good deal."

"Please get there as quickly as you can," she said.

He bowed and held the door open, and a moment later was sliding down the hill. As he pushed the accelerator home he said to himself:

"As she wants to get there in ten minutes, she shall!"

Fortunately, it was the luncheon hour, the streets of Monaco were empty and the road beyond pretty clear. As soon as he got under the railway arch he let the car out to full speed. In less than ten minutes he turned in at the Reserve and opened the door gravely.

"Just did it within the time," he said, smiling; "but being up all night's not a good preparation for fast driving."

Her serious eyes showed cool astonishment.

"Why stay up all night?" she asked in a detached tone, suggesting condemnation.

"I was told to wait for you yesterday morning at eleven o'clock. I got no message, so I have been waiting ever since."

"Really?" she said, and the color came into her cheeks more through annoyance, it seemed to him, than from any other feeling. "I thought father said eleven to-day."

"It doesn't matter," rejoined Bancroft pleasantly. "I read all night; it doesn't matter at all."

"But you must be tired?" she repeated; still with the note of annoyance in her voice.

"Not a bit," he replied, "only I like to be at my best when I have to drive fast, or take risks."

"I'm sorry," the girl said a little hesitatingly, "but I promised to take my friends to Nice and over the Corniche back to Monte Carlo. Perhaps you're too tired?"

"Not at all," he exclaimed hastily, "not at all! Please don't alter any of your arrangements. I deserve to have had to wait a little longer for not waiting long enough the first time," and he bowed, smiling. He hardly knew why, but he wanted to be nice to her.

She nodded quietly, the serious eyes again resting on him, and then she turned and went down the garden.

"It has all been a mistake, then," he said to himself. But the dominant impression she left on him was one of pride that almost reached indifference. He felt vaguely that she had been annoyed rather than interested in hearing that he had waited all day and all night.

"She resents even the crumpled rose leaf," he said to himself—"devilish selfishness!" The resentment in him was intensified by the fact that he'd have liked to have liked her. Her eyes were very fine, he decided, and, as she had turned and walked away in her simple tailor-made dress, he had a very definite picture of a shapely form moving gracefully, swiftly, yet without haste. He took his car to the shed, left word where he would be, and went out for his lunch.

While he sat over his coffee Miss Foxwell's face came back to him. First he thought she was not pretty enough to deserve the name of "beauty" that Rossall had given her. But, as he recalled her face, it seemed to him to merit more praise than at first sight he was inclined to give it. The eyes were superb, he decided: large, gray, with dark spots in the iris and long, black lashes; the hair auburn and wavy; the nose daintily cut. The mouth he thought was too small—a baby mouth, pouting in the middle, and a baby, round, soft chin. She ought to be weak and yielding he said to himself. But he preferred to accuse nature of inconsistency and trust the impression made by the arresting eyes and cool aloofness of manner.

"She's filled with hard pride," he concluded, and would have liked to despise her, but could not. This started a new train of thought in him. "The father, too, is proud and imperious. But he has got reason to be. He won in the fight of life. But what has she done to be proud? Nothing!" And he shrugged his shoulders

in disdain. "What was her pride based on? Probably the money that made everybody kow-tow to her; perhaps a little, her good looks; most of all, of course, bias of nature. . . .

"Is pride a quality or a defect?" he asked himself. "People acknowledge it in themselves as if it were a virtue, and, in so far as it is a sign of strength, I suppose it is a quality. But a very doubtful one. Self-content makes us unsympathetic to new influences, and it is by new influences and by sympathy we grow. Pride limits the mind. But what can it matter to me whether she's proud or humble, shallow or deep? I shall probably never see her again a month from now." But she had put a certain disquiet in him—her nature seemed to him puzzling; a problem in psychology.

At about three o'clock the Commissionaire came to bring him to the door, and immediately he swung his car round and stood waiting. In a few moments the party came out, a couple of men, and a girl, and Miss Foxwell.

"To Nice," she said, "and then to Monte Carlo by the Corniche."

Bancroft bowed, put on his hat, and swung the car into the road. He noticed that Miss Foxwell had been handed into the car with great *empressement* by the older man, who looked like an Italian. But, after all, what did it matter to him; he had only to mind his own business. He ran rapidly through Nice, and three-quarters way up the hill to the Observatory before he was stopped.

Then Miss Foxwell asked him to open the car. Nothing else happened till they came into Monte Carlo at about half-past four, and he was told to take them to the Grand. When they got down, Miss Foxwell said in a detached way:

"You can go now, if you're tired."

"Please don't consider me," he replied. "I'm perfectly rested."

With a slight inclination of her head she took him at his word, and went into the hotel still accompanied by the Italian and his younger friend.

An hour later the four came out again and the two men took their leave after making an appointment to meet later in the rooms. Standing by the carriage door Bancroft could not help noticing that the Italian was making up to Miss Foxwell for all he was worth: his fine eyes were all adoration, his voice a caress with a tinge of appeal and reverence in it—a really remarkable performance, Bancroft had to admit; no actor could have mimed passionate and respectful love more perfectly. And, to his amazement, Miss Foxwell accepted Count Ruspoli's homage with almost equal frankness. While thanking him for the pleasant lunch and tea she let her eyes meet his fully and, save that her manner was one of entire unconsciousness, she was as rapt in her attention as the Italian was in devotion. With a little spasm of annoyance Bancroft asked himself: "Is she acting, too, or are they in love with each other? It's nothing to me," he decided, "whether she's in

love or not; but her eyes are certainly expressive. . . ."

He took Miss Foxwell and her girl friend up the hill to the Riviera Palace, and was told to wait. In an hour and a half he took them to dinner at the Paris, and was again told to wait. After the Casino closed he drove to the foot of the steps to take up the father and daughter. Count Ruspoli was with them in immaculately perfect evening dress; he handed Miss Foxwell into the car and Bancroft noticed with pleasure that it was the girl who cut the farewells short: "She can flirt as well as the Italian," he said to himself, "but tires of it sooner, not having anything to gain by play-acting. . . ."

As they were entering the hotel Mr. Foxwell said: "Are you an early riser?"

"Fairly," Bancroft replied; "I generally get up about seven."

"Please be here to-morrow morning at eight," said Mr. Foxwell. "I want a little talk with you."

Bancroft bowed, and the other turned on his heel and went into the hotel.

All these little incidents are told in detail because first impressions are always important, and the little misunderstandings tended to irritation later. Besides Bancroft was serving for the first time, and every happening was novel and had an extravagant effect on him. Later, the daily routine of his work passed almost unnoticed, but just at first the new relation between himself and others made every trifle weighty to him.

CHAPTER IV

INVIGORATED by a sound sleep and a good breakfast, Bancroft reviewed the events of the previous day in a new spirit. He had told Miss Foxwell that he was not tired, but, though she knew he had had no sleep the night before, she had still kept him up till midnight. Evidently, too, she had not taken the trouble to tell her father about the mistake. It all showed want of consideration, he decided; either dislike of himself or the hard indifference of a shallow nature. It disappointed and annoyed him not to be able to think well of her, for she had an extraordinary attraction. Having lots of time, he walked up the hill to the Riviera Palace, wondering on the way whether he could do anything to conciliate Miss Foxwell without loss of dignity. Mr. Foxwell met him on the terrace of the hotel.

"It was my fault," he began, "that you were kept up last night till the Casino closed. Of course, I had no idea that you were up all the night before. My daughter told me in the lift of the mistake that had been made. We seem determined to have all the misunderstandings possible at the beginning, eh?" he remarked, smiling, adding casually, "I hope you weren't very tired?"

"No, no!" replied Bancroft cheerily; "I was rather

sorry afterwards I had even mentioned it. But Miss Foxwell wanted to go very fast, and the road to Beaulieu winds too much for high speed to be safe. I spoke of the all-night wait to excuse myself."

Mr. Foxwell nodded. "I understand. Now, we'd all like to go for a good long run to-day. Have you any trip to propose?"

"Any number," said Bancroft. "The difficulty is the choice. You can go to Peira Cava in a couple of hours and lunch with snow about you under pine trees. It is five thousand feet up—a delightful drive with fine views on all hands."

"That might entail a strain on the heart," said Mr. Foxwell, "Mrs. Foxwell is not very strong."

"Then there is the Corniche d'Or, that's opened between Cannes and St. Raphael. We could come back through the Esterel Mountains. That would be about two hundred kilometers."

"Too far, I'm afraid, to-day," objected Mr. Foxwell.

"We could go to Sospel," proposed Bancroft, "by Mentone and up the Col di Tende, and come back the same way, or round through Italy, or back by Nice, but that would make it long."

"Views good?" asked Mr. Foxwell.

"Wonderful!" replied Bancroft.

"Then we'll go to Sospel," he said. "What time ought we to start?"

"If we go by Mentone, half-past ten or eleven will be soon enough; you'll reach the Col di Tende then and

lunch by half-past twelve or quarter to one. If you went by Nice you would have to start a good hour earlier."

"Then be here at eleven, please," decided Mr. Foxwell.

At eleven Bancroft was before the door with his car. In a few moments the party came out. The husband took Mrs. Foxwell to the car very carefully, helped her in, and put a cushion under her feet. A maid adjusted another small cushion behind her neck. She was fussed over as if she were an invalid, yet she looked in excellent health.

Bancroft noticed that she was still a pretty woman, rather stout, but remarkably preserved, who might have been between thirty-five and forty, large blue eyes, good skin, and a baby, soft, round face, just a pretty mask, he concluded, with no particular expression or meaning.

When he caught her eyes she smiled at him very pleasantly.

"That's where the daughter gets her good looks," he decided. "Her character comes from her father," he added, as she got into the car quietly and took her seat by her mother without any to-do. Then the father seated himself; and, to Bancroft's astonishment, the maid came round to him.

"Have you room enough for me?" she asked in French, saucily.

"Certainly, Mademoiselle," replied Bancroft smiling, and pointing to the seat by his side.

"I speak no English," she went on in French, while settling herself at her ease; "but I shall introduce myself to you. My name's Berthe Amayene, and I don't see why we shouldn't have just as good a time as the people inside, do you?"

"No, indeed!" replied Bancroft, a little surprised, but amused all the same.

The girl's face was bright and piquant, if not regularly pretty. In every respect Berthe was a typical product of the South of France, with masses of black hair, brown-black eyes, and more than a penciling of mustache. She was very lively and quick, and determined to talk. Bancroft learned a good deal from her chatter, in spite of himself. She made no secret of the fact that she preferred Mr. Foxwell to either of the ladies. To his astonishment, her dislike concentrated itself on the mother particularly, whom she called a *malade imaginaire*. The servant's view of her mistress didn't appeal to Bancroft, in the very slightest degree, and accordingly he began to talk of other things, in order to cut short her envious confidences.

In a short time he almost forgot himself in the excitement of getting to know a bright and pretty girl. He had enough knowledge of life to start Berthe talking about herself and her childhood, and found she had a good deal of sound, practical sense. But whenever she got off her pet subject she returned to the Foxwells, who seemed to obsess her, and whom she couldn't at all understand. Bancroft had his work cut out to

keep her away from the tabooed theme, and he only reached partial success by paying her compliments and telling her little stories of Napoleon drawn from his recent reading. In spite of all his efforts, Berthe still managed to tell him a good deal about her employers. She called Mrs. Foxwell a selfish hypochondriac, though she had only the vaguest idea of the meaning of the word; she seemed to resent being made to come out with the car to take care of her.

"She's as strong as I am," she cried indignantly, "and I've two days' work with her things which I could have got on with this afternoon, and now it must all be left. She thinks of nobody but herself. Mademoiselle is selfish, too, if you like, but she doesn't pretend things, and some people think her pretty. Do you?" She shot the question at him, and watched its effect.

Bancroft smiled. "I think you are pretty!" he said, and began to talk again in order to put a bridle on her tongue. When they reached the Col di Tende they all got out to admire the view. Bancroft had to oil his engine, for the long ascent had made it a little hot, and while doing this the Foxwells moved about in the cool, bright air. Feeling that she had talked a great deal, and perhaps flirted a little in her way with the chauffeur, Berthe seized the opportunity, and tried to conciliate Miss Foxwell.

"Oh, Mademoiselle!" she said, "that chauffeur talks like a book. He has been telling me all about Napoleon, and how he came along this very road. But who cares

about Napoleon now? He was dead before we were born!"

Miss Foxwell looked at her and shrugged her shoulders slightly, whether at the maid or at her remark it would be difficult to say. She probably understood both better than Berthe imagined. Her impenetrable self-control annoyed the expansive little Frenchwoman—not for the first time.

Mrs. Foxwell had overheard what Berthe said. For some reason or other she took a good deal of interest in the chauffeur. Mrs. Foxwell knew a man when she saw one, and now resolved to turn her knowledge to account. As a girl, Mamie Madison had been the belle of Troy, and no one could understand why at twenty-two she had married Henry Foxwell. She knew every man in the town, and looked upon a goodly number of them as her beaux. The truth is, in spite of violet eyes and long lashes and baby features, Miss Mamie had early determined to marry a rich man who would be good to her, and she had chosen wisely, as persons unswayed by passion are apt to choose. The misery and pain of bearing her first child made her resolve never to have another, and accordingly she pleaded illness at first, and finding that the plea won her tender solicitude, kept it up more or less all her life. Her husband, who had spent too much time in studying men and markets to have learned much about women who are moved by even more complex motives, thought his wife weak and delicate, and was always careful of her, but her daugh-

ter knew her mother better; knew, too, that she sought her own way with an unscrupulous persistence usually crowned with success. After many trials of strength, Miss Jenny had a certain awe of her mother, who had an armory of feminine weapons which the daughter scorned to use, though compelled to recognize their efficiency when employed on her father.

It was Mrs. Foxwell who drew Bancroft into the conversation.

"My maid tells me," she began, with a smile, and this smile of eager interest had always had its effect, "that Napoleon used this road we are on?"

"This is almost the scene of his first victory," replied Bancroft, pointing to the valley below them.

Instinctively the violet eyes opened wider still, and the lips parted in expectancy.

Bancroft could not help responding.

"A curious little incident occurred here," he began. "A lady of influence, the wife of one of the Chief Commissioners to the army, came up here just before the first advance. Napoleon met her and showed her the Austrian positions in the plain below us. The lady wondered what war was like, wanted to see it. Napoleon, to please her, ordered a partial advance and brought on a fight of outposts in which four soldiers were killed."

"How interesting!" breathed Mrs. Foxwell, looking up at him with what a youthful admirer had once called her "Madonna gaze."

Her excessive enthusiasm made Bancroft wish he hadn't begun the story, but as it was he had to finish it.

"At Sainte Helena," he went on, "twenty-five years afterwards, Napoleon declared that he regretted the wanton sacrifice of those four men more than anything in his whole career. It's curious that a man whose ambition destroyed hundreds of thousands of lives should have even remembered the loss of those four recruits; yet his regret seems to me characteristic and very human."

"Most human!" cried Mrs. Foxwell. "How wonderfully you realize it all."

Bancroft found himself seeking the inscrutable eyes of the daughter, who made no remark.

The rest of the day passed without any notable incident. They lunched and returned by the same road to Monte Carlo, for Mrs. Foxwell decided that the air out of the sun was very cold, and she was afraid of being out when the sun went down. She wished to get back in time to have her tea in comfort at the hotel, and had had as much fresh air as she wanted. Furthermore, it gave her a certain amount of pleasure, a little feeling of her own importance, to decide anything against the general wish. They all wanted evidently to go into Italy, and have all the trouble with the *customs,* because the chauffeur spoke of it as a marvelous drive. But having found out that it would take an hour and a half longer, she made up her mind not to be strong enough to attempt it. Her decision of course was immediately

accepted by Mr. Foxwell, and in obedience to it Bancroft reached the Riviera Palace just before five o'clock. Mrs. Foxwell was kind enough to tell him "the drive had been just too lovely," and Bancroft came to the conclusion that the next time he proposed any trip he would have to make a point of arranging to stop somewhere for meals.

That evening Miss Foxwell did not go to the rooms. Some friends came to dinner, and by eleven o'clock she was in her bedroom, and had called Berthe to brush her hair. Berthe seized the opportunity to talk about the chauffeur, for indeed she was more than a little curious about him.

"Is the new chauffeur English or American, Mademoiselle?" she began, and when told he was American she cried that she would never have believed it, for he spoke such perfect French, and seemed to know all about France.

"You know, I was born at Digne," she began; "well, he knows Digne quite well, and Castellane, and the road to Sisteron. He has been everywhere, everywhere, and knows all sorts of strange things. He's very interesting, don't you think?" The pause having brought no answer, she went on: "He thinks Mademoiselle very beautiful."

"Did he say so?" asked Miss Foxwell, carelessly taking up the handglass the while, in which Berthe's face, too, was reflected.

"Not just in words," Berthe had to admit reluctantly,

"but one could see that his eyes fairly devoured Mademoiselle. But why doesn't he talk at all about living people? Only the dead seem to interest him, but he talks wonderfully, I think. *Il est bel homme, n'est-ce-pas, Mademoiselle?*" she added, in the most impersonal way, putting her head on one side like a bird, to stare at the hair she was brushing. But Miss Foxwell didn't answer, and so she resumed the attack a little more directly.

"As for me, he pleases me, that man. He is strong and kind; I like his face, though one wouldn't say it was handsome, handsome. A strong face, *n'est-ce-pas, Mademoiselle?*"

"I notice when you talk about his strength you pull my hair!" was the quiet reply.

"Mademoiselle must forgive me, but she has such masses of hair that if one wants to brush it well, one is compelled to use strength, and then it is such a lovely color," and as she spoke, Berthe drew the strands of it across her hand and gazed on it admiringly as if she saw it for the first time.

All her little attempts to get her mistress's opinion of the chauffeur having failed, she applied herself to her work in sulky silence, determined to finish as quickly as possible. As she began to braid the first meshes in long plaits, her mistress looked up.

"Please don't stop brushing yet," she said, "there must be a good deal of dust in it after that drive; you have not done it nearly as thoroughly as usual."

"Mademoiselle will pardon me," replied Berthe a little

piqued, "but I have been all over it carefully, and spent more time on it than usual."

"You may think so," remarked the even voice, "but it isn't the fact. Generally you brush it right down four hundred times; to-night you haven't brushed it quite three hundred, and I would like five hundred after that drive; that's why I came up to bed early."

With an audible sniff Berthe began her work again. Did she tweak the hair once or twice on purpose, or why was it that every now and then Miss Foxwell's pretty brows knitted into a frown?

CHAPTER V

THE next few days were taken up in little excursions here and there to lunch or dinner. About this time most of the friends of the Foxwells were leaving Monte Carlo, and as their social engagements diminished, their drives naturally grew longer. At length Bancroft persuaded them to go for a really long drive, which he declared was one of the most beautiful in all the South. They would have to go up the Var, he said, then by the Gorges du Cians to Beuil, where they could have something to eat and return by the Gorges de Daluis. Mrs. Foxwell astonished everybody by saying that under his guidance a hundred and fifty or sixty miles would be nothing. Though they had arranged to start at half-past eight, she kept them waiting till nearly half-past nine. But she looked so bright and gay, nobody minded.

"This is one of my well days," she said with a charming smile to Bancroft when she did come down.

Bancroft noticed that the maid was left behind, and he was rather glad of it, for he knew by experience that the driving was difficult enough to occupy all his attention. They had almost passed through the Gorges of the Var, when Mrs. Foxwell stopped the car. Bancroft went round to the door to know what was wanted.

"I have persuaded my daughter to go in front," said Mrs. Foxwell, "I want to see everything on this delightful drive and she, too, will be able to see better from the front seat. It is just too perfect for words. I had no idea that the Var could be such a beautiful river."

Bancroft bowed by way of reply.

A little later the valley widened again, the driving grew easier, and he turned to his companion.

"This scenery is pretty, but commonplace," he said, "for the next two or three miles, but then I think you'll be astonished."

The intent eyes dwelt on him for a moment, but the girl contented herself with simply bending her head. Mentally Bancroft shrugged his shoulders, determined to keep his thoughts to himself for the future.

Quarter of an hour afterward they began running up the long ascent which leads through the narrow valley of the Cians. It would be absurd to try to describe the varied beauties of the road. The mountains on either hand came nearer and nearer, the ravine on the right at the bottom of which the river ran, grew deeper and deeper. Now the way was a mere tunnel between the overhanging cliffs; a little further on, the road had broken away, and they could see three hundred feet down to the little mountain torrent lying at the bottom of the gorge like a green serpent with foam-white scales.

Bancroft had to use all his skill to steer the big car along the narrow and dangerous road. He had already

noticed signs up, advising careful driving, and warning wayfarers that the road should not be used after two o'clock in the day. Sudden snowfalls, followed by hot sunshine, make it almost impossible to keep the road in good condition. One place was so bad that Bancroft had to get out and study it before adventuring. Silently Miss Foxwell got out after him to examine the awkward spot.

"Is there room?" she asked.

"A tight fit," he said.

"Will it be safe?"

"Quite safe," he replied. "You see, unlike a horse, one can drive a car to an inch."

In face of his coolness Miss Foxwell would have been ashamed to show fear, even if she had felt it; but in fact she felt nothing but a quickening of the blood, though she knew that the wheels would be on the very edge of the precipice, and it was fearsome looking down two or three hundred feet into the dark gorge. As they passed the bad spot she gave a little exclamation, and at once Bancroft pushed the brake home.

"What is it?" he asked.

"I thought I saw a dog in the stream."

They got out and looked, and found she was right. Far below, in the bed of the torrent, on a ledge almost covered with water, was a little dog, evidently terrified out of his life. It had probably been swept down by the rapid stream, and carried on to this coign of vantage by the merest chance.

"That'll be a hard climb," said Bancroft, looking down.

"Climb?" repeated Miss Foxwell. "What do you mean?"

"I can't leave the little brute there," he said, "to die."

"But you can't get down that precipice," she said; "it would be madness to try."

"I guess there's a way down," he said good-humoredly. "By going a little further back"—and he pointed—"I could get down and walk up the stream; it's only a little cold bath."

"But how would you climb up again?" she asked.

"It isn't the getting up that bothers me," he said, "one can always get up, because one sees where one's going; it's the getting down that's dangerous—in life, too," he added, looking at her merrily.

But her face clouded.

"I hope you'll not think of going," she said coldly. "We can easily send men from the next village to save the dog. It's quite absurd of you to do it. Besides," she added, a little imperiously, seeing him hesitate, "you'll keep us all late for lunch."

By this time Mr. Foxwell had joined them, and had heard his daughter's last words. He took her side immediately.

"A dangerous climb," he remarked, "and the people who live round here will probably know the best way down, and they'll have ropes. Besides, if they had

thought the dog worth saving, they'd have saved it already," he added carelessly.

Bancroft had the modern sympathy with dumb animals very strongly developed, and was, as we have already noted, tenacious of purpose, not to say obstinate. The opposition simply confirmed him in his resolve. Perhaps, too, unconsciously, at the bottom of his heart, was the desire to show off before Miss Foxwell, and win her admiration by courage and strength.

"Please talk to Miss Foxwell for ten minutes," he said to Mr. Foxwell, "and I'll get the dog," and without further ado he ran off a hundred yards or so down the road, to where the first turning hid him from sight. Here he stripped himself nearly, and after a good look at the position, swung himself over the parapet and began to let himself down cautiously, almost from hand to hand. The last twenty feet into the stream were really dangerous, and he was relieved to find the ice cold water about his feet. The stream, however, was not deep, and only took him just above the knees, and the bottom was grayish green pebbles, not unpleasant to walk on, so in a few minutes he had made his way to the dog, that, seeing him near at hand, greeted him with a long, mournful howl. The poor beast had evidently been on the ledge for some time, and was shivering with cold and badly frightened. Bancroft took him up and began to return. In spite of the inconvenience of carrying the dog, the climb up was easier than the descent had been, and in five or six minutes he had reached the road and

put the dog down in the dust. At once the animal set off up the road past the car as hard as he could race.

After dressing himself summarily, and stuffing collar and tie into his pocket, Bancroft hurried back to the car. Now that he had had his own way, he felt rather penitent; he ought to have shown more consideration, he thought, for the wishes of his employers. The dog's ingratitude, too, had cooled him, and he was rather apprehensive of how Miss Foxwell would regard his wilfulness. When he got to the car he found that Mr. Foxwell had already got in and Miss Foxwell was waiting quietly.

"So sorry to have kept you," he said, "but we have passed the dangerous part of the road, and in half an hour now we should be in Beuil."

Miss Foxwell simply inclined her head. Her feelings were somewhat mixed, and could he have read them they would probably have surprised him. At first she rather liked his not yielding to her and taking his own way, so different from all the other men she had known; but she didn't think of his courage at all, and on second thoughts she resented something imperious in his manner, and the fact that he had paid no attention to her remonstrance, which she felt had been very kind and condescending of her. Besides, he had scarcely spoken to her all the way up the gorge, whereas he had talked to that common, brainless little Berthe almost without ceasing. He had talked, too, to her mother; evi-

dently he wanted to be flattered with questions and appearance of interest.

"I shall certainly not show any interest in him," she decided.

But after a few moments' silence she admitted to herself that it was rather fine of him to have gone down that dreadful precipice for a dog. His face, too, she could see without looking at it, was flushed with the exercise, his hair all tumbled, and his shirt open at the neck without a collar. It all suited him. Something careless, defiant in his strength appealed to her. Suddenly she noticed his right hand holding the wheel, the knuckles showing white through the tan like his neck, which was strangely white, she thought. It troubled her. She set herself against him again for being so silent.

She could think of nothing but Bancroft, and she excused her obsession to herself by saying that he had been kind about the dog, and the word "kind" recalled Berthe's praise of him, "strong and kind." He was strong, she supposed, and resolute, and kind. But, after all, he had no attraction for her, though—she set herself with determination to think of someone else.

When they stopped in front of the inn at Beuil, there, on the wooden porch, was the brown dog he had saved, still wet, but now quite willing to be friendly. The landlord admitted that he had tried to drown the mongrel, but how it had managed to get rid of the brick he had tied round its neck and escape from the river, he

had no idea. The dog had evidently risen in his estimation.

After helping Mrs. Foxwell out, Mr. Foxwell asked Bancroft to bring a hamper in from the car.

"The hamper that was preferred to me," said Miss Foxwell lightly.

A little later, when taking his simple meal on the stoop of the little country inn, the meaning of Miss Foxwell's remark suddenly showed itself to Bancroft. Mrs. Foxwell had probably preferred her ease to her daughter's company. Berthe's estimate of her had therefore something to say for itself. With a certain malice, after the lunch he swung the hamper on to the top of the car, thinking to himself: "If Miss Foxwell wants to go inside, I'll give her the chance"—but Miss Foxwell made no sign of having noticed any change. She took her place beside him without a word, which gave him a rare thrill, until the thought was suggested by her apparent unconsciousness, that she had never noticed the hamper.

The Gorges of Daluis were even more surprising than the Gorges of Cians. As those hills had been all fawn-gray and ochre, with here and there pale green slopes relieved out with golden bushes, so these were all bare, red sandstone cliffs and peaks, picked out with clumps of dark pine. Once on the downward road he stopped just to show them the finest view. Five or six hundred feet below them ran the torrent, the little promontory on which they stood hanging right over the water. On

the other side the mountain, not fifty yards away from them, ran up quite two thousand feet, and sticking out in front of it like a tooth, a great pointed cone of red sandstone three hundred feet in height. A mountain behind shut them in—in front the vision wandered from cliff to cliff down the gorge. The silence, the gloom, the wild, solitary beauty of the place, took the heart.

A little later Bancroft said to his companion:

"Don't you think that the mind soon gets satiated with beauty, and becomes unable to absorb new impressions?"

"Why do you say that?" Miss Foxwell asked.

"You don't seem to admire these gorges as much as you admired those on the way up, and yet they are finer."

"They will probably stand out more clearly in memory," she said; "the perspective of memory is truer."

The remark surprised him a little. It showed that she could use her brains. He was glad to know that she wasn't empty-headed; glad, too, to feel that she didn't bear malice.

As for the girl, one impression of the latter part of the drive lived with her. She looked again at his hands on the driving wheel to see if they gave her the same feeling of tense strength. She noticed that while the right hand looked just as firm and strong as before, the left hand played on the buttons continually with little caressing touches; the union of gentleness and strength set her nostrils vibrating. . . .

Another incident from these first drives along the Riviera may be given here, because it had a surprising effect on Miss Foxwell's estimate of Bancroft. Trying once to persuade Mrs. Foxwell to take a longer drive, he told them about a mountain village beyond Nice called Aspromonte, and of a long talk he had had once with the village *curé*. He found him, he said, a man prematurely aged by rheumatic gout; he had tried in vain to persuade him to change his habits and diet.

"'I'm not particular about my eating,' said the Curé, 'I eat anything, meat or potatoes or vegetables, but fruits I don't care for. What I do like is a glass or two of the little wine from my own vineyard, that cleans the throat and excites the mind, and then after my dejeuner a cup or two of coffee with a little glass, perhaps, of *l'eau de vie de Marc* while I play my game of dominoes with the assistant of *Monsieur le Maire:* it's my coffee I like better than anything.'

"I tried to persuade him," said Bancroft, "that his wine and coffee and brandies together with his sedentary life were the cause of the aches and pains of which he complained. But he would not be persuaded. In fact, he was horrified, and seemed to take the advice as a reflection on his morality.

"'I was never drunk in my life!' he cried, 'never! Excited, perhaps, a little, but not more. I am most temperate!'

"And yet there he was at fifty-six, an old man, scarcely able to drag one leg in front of the other, and when I

urged him to leave off his coffee and cognac for even a week, just to try the effect, he said that he fasted as the church ordained, and the church prohibited meat, and not coffee or brandy, and the church knew best.

"I pressed him a little further," Bancroft went on, "assuring him that the result of abstinence from the brandy alone would be extraordinary, that he would be twenty years younger in a month. But he shrugged his shoulders.

" 'What do you give me in place of my innocent pleasures?' he asked. 'A little longer life on this earth, eh? A little more anxiety, a little more disappointment and disillusion, a little more pain of one's own, and a little more suffering for the misery of others? I prefer my cups of coffee and *chasse* of cognac and fewer of the dreary years.' "

With voice and gesture Bancroft brought the man before them, and the pathos in his hopeless estimate of life.

One day Mrs. Foxwell had taken them into Nice shopping, and finding that her *couturière* wanted some time to measure and fit her, she told them they could do what they liked for a couple of hours; they needn't come back for her before five.

"It's now barely three," said Mr. Foxwell; "we should drive somewhere."

Suddenly Miss Foxwell asked Bancroft:

"How far is it to Aspromonte?"

"Half an hour or so in the car," he replied.

"Please take us up there," she said. "We'd like to see your little church and the Curé."

He ran them up to the mountain village, but when they got to the plateau below it he stopped to overhaul the ignition which was acting imperfectly, and so contented himself with pointing out to Mr. and Miss Foxwell the steep stone way, half road, half staircase, which led up to the village and the old church.

The work on the machine took him half an hour or so, and just as he had finished, Miss Foxwell and her father returned. She said nothing to him then, but her visit had been a great disappointment; she had met the Curé, and tried to talk to him, but found him a stupid, grumbling, old man, who seemed disinclined to talk. Her father had been even less successful; the Curé scarcely answered him. Piqued by the comparison of how much Bancroft had got out of him and how little she could get, she had used her prettiest smiles and most charming manners on the old man, but in vain. He scarcely looked at her, did not thaw out at all, and she came away more than a little annoyed.

On the way down from the village to the plateau where Bancroft was standing, it suddenly occurred to her that most of the charm of Bancroft's picture belonged to Bancroft. He it was who brought out the pathos of the old man's hopeless outlook. A light came to her, and she understood that it was his intense interest in life that made other people interesting. It was he himself and his vigor that made his portraits live. In this new

spirit she looked at him as she came near the car, and noticed consciously for the first time something extraordinarily alert and vital in him. On her way back to Nice, seated beside her father in the car, she decided that the power and vitality were in his eyes and in the quick, abrupt way he moved. "Vital," she said to herself more than once, though "virile," too, came into her mind, and almost to her lips.

From this time on, her interest in him began to grow almost from hour to hour. Great spirits draw more strongly than little ones, and Bancroft has been sketched badly if he does not give the impression of a certain originality and force.

CHAPTER VI

A FORTNIGHT or so later, about the first of June, the Foxwells held a sort of council as to whether they would go to Paris by train or by car. Miss Foxwell scarcely intervened in the discussion. She knew it would be wiser in any event to leave the responsibility of choice to her mother.

"I'm content either way," she said. "The hot, dusty train gives one a headache; but I dare say there will be long afternoons on the road when we shall wish we were in Paris or London."

"Our visit to Lady Goring," said the mother, "isn't till August; so we have lots of time, and it might be possible to get Lord Favershall to join us on this motor trip; don't you think so, daughter?"

But Miss Jenny wasn't to be seduced into giving any opinion.

"I dare say, mother," she replied.

Mr. Foxwell broke in.

"But the point now is not whether Favershall can come and meet us or not, but whether we shall go by car or by train to Paris. I prefer the car. What do you think, Jenny? You were against the gentleman-chauffeur idea at first as much as I was. Do you think better of him now?"

"I feel as a rule people shouldn't fall out of their class," Miss Foxwell replied, "but there are exceptions, and I dare say Mr. Bancroft will win back again."

"You're in favor of him, then?" he summed up, and turning to his wife he went on, "And you, mother, what do you think?"

"He's careful," Mrs. Foxwell admitted, "and does not presume. I like him, but I don't know a bit what you wish, Jenny," she said complainingly, and her eyes probed her daughter.

Miss Jenny turned round, her eyebrows lifting slightly.

"I have no preference," she said: "you can decide either way, I don't care which. One thing's certain. We can't take the maids with us in the car."

"I can't part with Grannie!" exclaimed Mrs. Foxwell, "she's been with me too long; but of course we could send her to Paris, and as for Berthe, she's really your maid, and you must do with her as you please, if you intend to keep her?" she half questioned.

"We'll send Grannie, then, to the Hotel at Paris to get everything ready," said Miss Foxwell, "and I'll let Berthe go," she went on. "She's inclined to be familiar, and she has no taste."

"Then we'll go by road," said Mrs. Foxwell; "it'll pass the time pleasantly, and give us something to talk about later."

And so it was decided.

Did Miss Jenny act as she did through calculation, or was she merely pretending indifference? It would be

difficult to disentangle and give their due weight to all her different interwoven motives. For one thing, she felt sure her mother would take up so much room in the car with packages that she would be compelled to sit with Bancroft, and she still resented a little his self-confidence and imperious ways. But he excited her, interested her, too, and she imagined it would be difficult for her to strike a balance; but unwittingly she was deceiving herself, or rather she was unconscious yet how much this new interest meant to her, and had no idea of the strength of the attraction.

As soon as it was decided to go by car, the next question was by what route, and here Bancroft had to be taken into council.

Miss Foxwell felt inclined to go by Avignon, for then she could see all the towns that her reading had told her about—Arles and Aigues-Mortes, and the rest. But as usual Bancroft had different ideas.

"You're sure to see all those places," he said, "because they're on the railway. Some winter or other you'll stay at Avignon and make excursions from there to all the neighboring towns. But here is warm spring and a car, and you ought to leave the beaten track a little and see new things. The road north lies through Grenoble to Dijon, and from here to Grenoble we ought to go across the Alps and up through that marvelous Dauphiné. There are practically two roads to Grenoble, one over Digne and Sisteron, and the other through the mountains over Barcellonette and Briançon, and down

the valley of the Romanche, the most beautiful drive, I think, in the world."

Nobody could resist his convinced enthusiasm, but when her father praised Bancroft's knowledge, Miss Jenny pouted:

"He's very clever, I admit; but it's exasperating to find someone who always knows more than you do, and is always right."

The father smiled at her, taking her little heat of irritation for more than it meant, and laying it as soothing unction to certain apprehensions which had begun to spring up in his mind. For himself, he always preferred a man who knew his job thoroughly, and it seemed to him plain proof of dislike to find fault with competence.

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In due course Miss Berthe was discharged and given her fare to Paris. She hoped she would see Mademoiselle there, and get engaged again. But Mademoiselle didn't commit herself to any hope in the matter that would have flattered Berthe. She smiled vaguely, and gave extra money heedlessly.

"Even when she's grateful," Jenny thought, "the girl can't help presuming."

Miss Foxwell had decided long before that Berthe as a maid had neither taste nor tact; besides she always saw her now talking eagerly with Bancroft as on the road to Sospel, and using her eyes upon him, and she wanted nothing more to do with her.

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After sending all the heavy baggage and Grannie with Mr. Foxwell's man to the Hotel Meurice, in Paris, they started one morning about nine o'clock. Bancroft was amused by the number of parcels brought down. Mr. Foxwell contented himself with a "grip," but two great trunks were put on behind, and the whole of the top of the car was covered with hat boxes and light cases. Bancroft brought them into order, stretched a black tarpaulin cover over them and belted it down tightly. The inside of the car, too, was half full of rugs and baskets, and packages of all sorts. Mr. Foxwell sat in his corner hemmed in by them.

After one glance at the position, Miss Foxwell took her seat beside Bancroft. Her mother told her that there was room inside, but she contented herself with saying that she would get inside if she felt cold or if it rained, and away they went.

The road at first was quite familiar to them. It ran through Nice and up the valley of the Var. They lunched at Puget-Theniers and spent an hour at Entrevaux, a little medieval town built into the river bed, where both the mountain behind and the river in front had been cleverly utilized to make the place a fortress. The bridge leading to the town terminated in a drawbridge and eight hundred feet above the town perched a little eyrie of a fort, which in the days of bows and arrows must have been almost impregnable. It was like a glimpse of the middle ages with the castle of the robber baron dominating the place.

Early in the afternoon they got into Annot, where they proposed to stay the night.

Following Bancroft's advice, they spent some hours wandering about the old town, with its narrow streets braided about the mountain side. They didn't see anything of particular importance till suddenly they came upon Bancroft, who showed them dozens of interesting things, which they had failed to notice. He pointed out genuine Gothic windows in many of the old houses, windows of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and above the sharp pointed arches of the doorways strange inscriptions in Latin and Greek and Provençal. Even the church was found to be remarkable for watch towers furnished with arrow slits; here and there too little Gothic bridges plainly intended as places of refuge—a thousand signs that this twelfth century town had been the scene again and again of unexpected desperate attack and defense. That forgotten life of hourly struggle and danger was brought very near them. The question suggested itself, was not our life, though more arduous, less dangerous even for the many toilers?

In Annot Bancroft heard that the pass of Allos, leading to Barcellonette, was still impassable with snow. "Six feet deep," one man assured him. After dinner he hastened to inform Mr. Foxwell that after all they would have to go by Digne.

But Miss Foxwell would not hear of it.

"These country people exaggerate so," she said; "as we intended to go by Barcellonette, let us go by Barcel-

lonette: we can come back if there is snow. I believe we shall get through."

The truth was Miss Jenny had been rather humiliated in the afternoon to find how much more Bancroft's eyes saw than hers, and so she was determined to have her own way, right or wrong.

To her surprise Bancroft gave in without a word. It was resolved to start next morning for the pass, and they started soon after nine. At about half past eleven they had got up some six thousand feet and found the snow, and as the road wound steadily upward the snow came nearer and nearer, till at length it invaded the road itself, and became deeper and deeper, till, at a corner, they ran into a great drift of it, and the car was brought gradually to a standstill.

All the way Bancroft had said nothing, made no remonstrance, and when the car was brought to a stop he climbed on top of it at once in order, as he said, to see what chance they had of getting through. When he came down he reported that the deep snow seemed to be only a few yards long, so he backed the car and then got up speed and rushed at the drift again. This time he went some yards further into it, and two more attempts carried them through with a great jolt, but a couple of hundred yards further on, they met a deeper drift, and when Bancroft got upon the car he had to admit that the deep snow continued as far as he could see, and, though they were close to the top of the pass, the way was barred and they must return.

"I'm afraid there's nothing for it," he concluded smiling. "I wish I could get through, but I've done my best, and it seems impossible."

For some reason or other Miss Jenny pretended to be more obstinate than she was.

"I want to go on," she repeated. "I do want to see it all."

Mr. Foxwell asked:

"Would it be impossible to get men and shovel the snow away?"

"It would take twenty men a week," said Bancroft.

Mr. Foxwell at once resigned himself.

"We'd better get back," he said, "and have our lunch in Annot."

But getting back, even, was no easy task. The engine had been chilled by the snow, and Bancroft found it difficult to start it. He had to use all his strength, standing thigh deep in the snow, to push the car back a little, and get it going by its own impulse down the steep road. He then ran and climbed in over the spare wheel, and guided the big car carefully back through the snow for nearly a mile before he could find a place to turn round. Suddenly Miss Jenny noticed that the snow on his trousers had melted and was dripping in little puddles of water all over the footboard.

"You must be wet through!" she said; "and you don't seem to have noticed it."

"It's nothing," he declared. "I shall quickly get dry at Annot."

"But you'll catch your death of cold, wet through like that, driving for the next hour."

"No, no!" he cried, "nothing hurts you much when you're fit and in the open air, particularly when you're hungry," he added, "as I am now," and he laughed cheerily.

The way he took the whole thing made an extraordinary impression on Miss Foxwell: not a trace of ill-humor in him, no complaint, nothing but a boyish delight in the difficulties and discomforts, not a word of reproach, no "I told you so!", a simple and happy good nature. For the first time she felt a spasm of real liking for him; the wilful, good-tempered boy in him attracted her immensely.

* * * * *

They had lunch at the hotel at Annot, and early in the sunny afternoon ran on toward Digne. Miss Foxwell often wondered later how it happened that after this adventure on the way to Barcellonette she became so much more intimate with Bancroft than she had been before. Perhaps it was her own kinder estimate of him that lifted Bancroft's spirits and loosened his tongue that afternoon. Several circumstances combined to put him at his best. First of all he knew the road, and it was a good one, and then the car, as if to show it hadn't been damaged by its rough handling in the snow, ran like a thing possessed, humming its own little song of joy and triumph. And the girl, interested for the first time in Bancroft as a man, wanted to know all about

him—where he had come from, what he meant to do in life, how he stood being a chauffeur, which to her was much as if she were to be a maid or waiting-woman. And her manifest interest excited and inspired him like a rare wine.

"You love driving, don't you?" she began; "you do it so well. Where did you learn?"

"I always liked machinery," he began, "I heard of this car in the British Embassy; I bought it and soon learned all about it. You see," he went on, "I had done a year's studying in Berlin when my father died, and I wanted a change badly. I ran through Germany and over the Brunner Pass to Venice, an unforgettable experience which taught me many things——"

"But now, what do you mean to do?"

"I don't know," he confessed, "whether to go back to America at once or try to write a novel here. If I had doubled my little capital at Monte Carlo," he laughed merrily, "instead of losing the greater part of it, I'd have written the book."

"So," she said, "already the need of money is beginning to make you do what otherwise you would not do; want of money is slavery."

"True, true," he cried. "I hadn't thought of it like that. Do you know, you're a very extraordinary girl!" he added. His tone of utter wonder was exceedingly flattering, and Miss Foxwell felt excited by it out of measure. In her embarrassment, and anxious not to betray it, she blurted out her real wish.

"Tell me about your life," she said. "Where were you born? Why did you leave home?"

"I was born near Eureka, Kansas, on a ranch. Mother died when I was too young to know anything about her, and father kept me with him too long—till I was fifteen or sixteen. I have felt since he must have been rather lonely; but I wanted to study and, when he would not let me, I took the bit in my teeth and went to Lawrence University."

"But how did you live?" she asked; "was it—easy?"

"At first difficult," he said, laughing. "I lived pretty hard the first winter and never had a sit-down meal. Gradually I got through. I kept the books in two stores and then got a job leasing out the theater to theatrical companies. That's where I saw how money was made and learned the trick of it."

"Do tell me," she entreated.

"It's hardly worth telling," he replied. But the deep, serious eyes drew him on.

"I was employed by Devlin, the cashier of the First National Bank, to be in the box office of the theater every afternoon to meet the agents of the different traveling companies. I had to hire the theater to them and see about taking the receipts when we worked on half profits.

"One Saturday I was in the office in the forenoon when a man came along, called Wurmser. In five minutes he had rented the theater from me, at the price I asked, for two weeks for *Haverley's Minstrels:* 'the

greatest show on earth; make you laugh till you're hungry and empty and sore. Let someone else sell the tickets and go inside yourself and enjoy it. Best show in the world; don't miss it. Now I'm off to wake up this old town with bills and posters.' And he was out like a whirlwind. He was back in an hour, more excited than ever.

"'What's the good of this durned, old one-horse town, anyway? Can't give 'em money; there ain't nobody to take it. Of all the lunk-headed, pie-faced muts I've ever seen, you Kansas men are the worst. Yes, sir, worse than Canucks. Why can't you get a move on you and do something? You might find out that you were alive if you hopped about a bit.'

"'What's the matter?' I asked. I could not help laughing at his voluble vehemence.

"'Matter?' he cried, and his heat seemed to generate heat; 'matter! the matter is I was prepared to spend five or six thousand dollars in this town in advertising *Haverley's Minstrels,* the greatest show in the world—the only show. And there you are, vacant lots staring at you on all sides, and no hoardings up, no bill-poster in the town. Great God Almighty! I saw fifty churches if I saw one and no bill-posting establishment; yet you call this an American town! Great hell! I'd sooner be a copperhead Indian and live in a wigwam or turn nigger than be such an American! They do have revival meeting excitements.

"'What do you do?' he exclaimed, turning to me.

'Why don't *you* turn bill-poster; you'd make more money at it in a month than you can at this silly business in a year. Here ye have to ask for money when money's all about asking for you; get a move on ye, I say.'

"I looked at him; there was something in what he said.

" 'Come out and eat,' I proposed, 'and we can talk it over. I'm just going to have something.'

" 'It's coming in over the bows, with you, is it?' he said, changing his tone. "I don't mind stoking up; I ain't put nothing in the boiler since this morning, six o'clock. Sure we can get something to eat in this cemetery?'

"I took him across to the Eldridge House and soon found that his excitement was justified. I had worked for a short time in a real estate office and knew that I could get the right to put up hoardings on the vacant lots. Roughly, in my head, I made an estimate of what it would cost, and soon came to see that a fortune was offered to me, for Wurmser was quite willing to put down five thousand dollars, in advance, if I could get someone to guarantee that his great bills and posters would be shown properly all over the town, especially on every vacant lot along Massachusetts Street. I thought I could put up the hoardings—a hundred of them for six thousand dollars, and I knew I could get the right of sticking bills up on dozens of different houses, simply because I knew the people. After din-

ner I took him across to Devlin of the First National Bank, and Devlin at once seized the idea and agreed to guarantee my carrying out the contract, agreed, too, to advance me a couple of thousand dollars, on Wurmser depositing his five thousand and giving me the business. The whole thing was done in an hour and I got a buggy, and, by way of gratitude, ran Wurmser across the river to the depot.

"'I guess I've woke you up,' he said, as we parted, 'and made your fortune, too, but shave your head and keep cool, or you'll go crazy in Sleepy Hollow;' and he pointed to the town.

"In three or four days I got the right to put up my hoardings. A week later, a hundred or so were up. If ever a show was properly advertised it was *Haverley's Minstrels,* and, strange to say, *Haverley's Minstrels* turned away money every night for the fortnight. I paid back the bank in the first two months, and in the year I cleared six thousand dollars. I found out then that money was made by using your brains in this world and not by taking salaries."

"But have you the business still?" Miss Foxwell asked.

"No, no," he said, laughing; "I gave it up when I became a Rhodes scholar; sold it for ten thousand dollars, which I spent in Oxford."

"Did you never see your father again?" she asked.

"Oh, yes," he replied. "Before going abroad, I went down and saw him, and made it up with him. He was a good man, but narrow. I've often thought since he

had grown stiff in sorrow and solitude and I ought to have been more considerate."

Everything he said excited, fascinated her. The strong, magnetic personality shot through with deep sympathies and tender feelings, enthralled her. He made life vivid, pulsing, real to her; she couldn't help sighing as she listened. How much more interesting life was to men. No wonder they were brighter, stronger, and did not spend their time in waiting and sad brooding.

"Splendid," she cried, passionately, "splendid, to be a man!"

He looked at her humorously.

"Surely the woman's kingdom is just as wide?" he said; "the same sky above, the same earth beneath."

She bit her lip. Old feelings she had choked down a hundred times were surging up in her, feelings of revolt and bitterness and misery, longings of the caged eagle. A lump grew in her throat; she felt as if she were choking; she had all she could do to prevent bursting into tears. She wished she could—a cry would be a relief to her over-burdened heart. But bravely she crushed it all down and winked a tear or two away. Had he noticed her emotion, she wondered? She hoped not. She didn't want him to see her weakness; she couldn't tell from his face. She was a little ashamed of her want of self-control. She needn't have been afraid. She had moved Bancroft as much as he had moved her. All the way to Digne he kept looking at her. Naturally he had noticed her extraordinary excitement, and the first stolen

glances at her showed him how beautiful her face could be in the stress of intense emotion; the eyes seemed larger, the spot of color in the cheeks, the trembling of the tremulous child's lips—all moved him unspeakably. Never afterward was she Miss Foxwell in his thoughts, but always Jenny, a tantalizing mystery, intensely attractive with a thousand possibilities in her of all sorts. The barriers between them had broken down.

CHAPTER VII

NEXT day it rained, but after breakfast Mr. Foxwell told Bancroft that both his wife and daughter wanted to go on through Barcellonette.

"We'll get there, you know, we Americans; if we can't get there directly, we'll go round."

And they got there, but were not interested in the clean, modern town; the pert villas of prosperous tradesmen round about seemed to hide the encircling mountains in some way. They carried the rain with them, and resolved in the sitting-room of the hotel that it could not possibly have rained in a better place.

Next morning was beautifully fine and sunny and they set out meaning to lunch at Embrun.

Though not a word had passed between Miss Foxwell and Bancroft since the evening before, their intimacy had grown again in the most astonishing way. The truth is that in thought they had been living with each other in the intervening hours, and the stolen, sweet preoccupation, though undesigned, had affected both of them. They had scarcely started when she began questioning him again.

"Why did you gamble? That made my father think badly of you."

"I told Mr. Foxwell," he replied, "that it was because

I had loafed long enough and wanted to force myself to get to work. But the truth is I was a little scared. I was getting into the habit of loafing, excusing it to myself by feeling that I was growing and learning a lot all the while."

"But you could have gone to work just as well without losing your money."

"That's true," he replied, "but it was harder. Study tempts me. Though loafing, I was learning. One seems to grow by receiving new impressions of beauty. I love that phrase of Mahomet: 'If you have two loaves, sell one quickly and buy a flower; for the soul too must be fed.'"

Her deep eyes turned on him and he saw she understood.

"Is there anything to equal the feeling that one has grown, has got nearer to the great men, can see them, understand them better? Money for its own sake I don't care about."

"What would you have done if you had won and doubled your capital?" she asked.

"I could live on the interest of a hundred thousand dollars," he replied seriously, "with what I could make by my writing; five thousand dollars a year sure, is enough to live decently on. I should have begun a novel at once. We all want to write 'the great American novel' you know. Sometimes I think it might be better first to try and become great men; perhaps it would be easier to write greatly afterward."

She looked at him and her eyes seemed to have light in them.

"You're very ambitious?"

"Sure, sure," he nodded, smiling; "the skies are high enough to give one room to grow."

Again her feelings rose in her throat and almost choked her. The soaring passion of the words spoke to her very soul. No one had ever interested and excited her, moved her, as this man did. But again she fought with her feelings and got the mastery.

For a little while the windings in the road took all his attention, and then as the loops straightened out into a long ribbon right down the valley, he turned to her.

"All this time," he said, "you have been asking me questions; but you've told me nothing of yourself."

"There is nothing to tell," she replied. "There never is anything to tell about a girl's life," she added bitterly. "We can never go directly to a goal; we have to go round always and all the passes are stopped for us just as the car was stopped yesterday, with snow-white reasons, cold, soft, innumerable."

"It is very unjust," he replied gently, and a stolen glance at the lovely flushed face made him resolve to go on.

"Won't you tell me why you like your father better than your mother?"

She turned on him with wonder dawning in the deep eyes, which changed into a little smile.

"That's surprisingly clever of you," she cried, "and

somehow or other one doesn't expect cleverness from you. You've a strange way of missing things at first that are quite obvious and yet getting to them afterwards. You are right in your guess and I'll tell you. My father is kind through and through and has great ability too, real courage. When he talks in New York about business everyone listens. I thought when you spoke of Napoleon, of the ability in him and the kindness, that my father must be rather like him. He has the same union of qualities. You should see him with his horses and men about the stable; they all worship him as the men in his office used to do. . . ."

"I thought all girls liked their mothers best," Bancroft went on.

Again the serious eyes rested on him.

"No two girls are alike," she replied; "I adored my mother till I was about fourteen. I thought there was no one like her in the world; to me she was the most beautiful and the sweetest of women. When she let me into her room, while she was dressing in the morning, I used to worship her as I don't think god or goddess was ever worshiped. I loved beauty, you see——

"Then I was sent away to school and when I came back I tried to get into the adoring mood again, but everything had altered. I saw that my mother did not want to have me home, I realized that I was a nuisance to her. I began to notice that she could make mistakes, foolish mistakes, and, worst of all, that she did not mind much so long as she did not pay for them. She'd just

get one of her attacks and everybody would be sorry, or she'd just stay in bed while father would wipe out the blunders and make good."

"But she's generally very much liked and admired?" Bancroft persisted.

"Oh, yes, she has a great position in New York and in Paris and London. She thinks it's all her doing, but I think it's chiefly father's money. Still, she is a success socially. An Englishman once used a word which suits my mother exactly; he talked about a 'climber'; well, mother is a climber, one of those roses that twine and ramp and push up and up, using any support, wood or iron, plaster or stone, to get a little higher. That's how I think of her; she's a 'climber.' I suppose I am too," she added. "I hate myself sometimes for it, but what else can one do?"

"And your father?" pursued Bancroft, "what does he think of the climbing?"

"He never speaks about it," she replied. "I don't think he takes any stock in it; but he helps mother all he can. I sometimes wonder whether he knows how his generosity is used and exploited. In her own way mother's as tenacious as father; only she's always thinking of herself, and he isn't."

"That's where you get your kindness from," Bancroft went on; "the qualities of the father are nearly always transmitted to the daughter, just as the mother's qualities are given to the son. Nearly all famous sons praise their mothers."

"Don't make any mistake," she said; "I don't think I'm kind. Would a sweet angel daughter judge her mother as I've just judged mine? I think I'm bitter; the wine of love turned to vinegar. . . ."

Suddenly an exclamation broke from her: "But look at that; did you ever see a town so splendidly placed?"

They were running through a broad valley, perhaps ten miles across, a mountain valley, for the air was keen in spite of the hot sunshine, and the valley was ringed about with snow-topped mountains. Half a mile away to the left ran a little river and in front of them, yet a little to the left, seemingly on the other side of the river, a town was set on a pedestal of cliffs rising sheer from the valley, three hundred feet in height, like ramparts.

"That is Embrun," he said, "an interesting place. You'll enjoy it. I should like to show you the church, if I might play guide."

"We'll be glad," she replied simply. "Father said at Annot that you were the best guide in the world. Father," she added reflectively, "has a very high opinion of you."

"I wish—" he exclaimed impulsively, but the next moment he had bitten the word off, so to speak, and was swinging the car sharply to the left.

"A bad turn," he said, as if in thought, and had not spoken again when they drew up in front of the little Hotel Moderne five minutes later.

* * * * *

After lunch Mr. Foxwell came to see him.

"There are interesting things to see here, my daughter tells me," he said, "and you will show them to us; shall we start?"

The party set out. Bancroft led them first to the *Place de l'Archevêché* near the ramparts, whence one gets an uninterrupted view over the whole country. With trees all about them, secular elms, and grass under their feet, they walked to the very edge of the cliff where you could almost drop a stone on the peasants at work in the fields which looked like a patchwork quilt three hundred feet below. In the middle distance ran the little river, the Durance, fringed with willows, and further away the snow-capped mountains rose, range on range, walling in the saucer-like valley.

Mrs. Foxwell amused them by suddenly saying in her decided way:

"I think Embrun is lovely, but who would have believed that France could be so beautiful? In America we think that England's beautiful, but no one ever tells us that France is beautiful."

"I haven't seen much," said Bancroft, smiling, "but I think France is the most beautiful country in the world after America and the most interesting. Now let us go and look at the church."

In the church itself they found little to interest them, but Bancroft quickly routed out the sacristan who displayed the treasures of the place. In the sacristy were half a dozen primitive pictures of the fourteenth and

fifteenth centuries, showing little knowledge of drawing and coloring, but rare depths of passionate emotion. It really seemed in one or two of them as if the awkward drawing and painting added to the effect of the feeling, emphasized its sincerity. And then the old man opened cupboards and showed them printed books three and four hundred years old, priceless treasures.

As they left the sacristy, Mr. Foxwell said:

"It seems to me that in France art takes something of the place religion holds with us."

Bancroft nodded; it wasn't the first time that Mr. Foxwell's insight had rather surprised him.

On leaving the church they just noticed the *Chambre des Notaires* side by side with the old fort, which is now a soldier's barracks. Fortress, church and law court, how much of life centers in these three!

The afternoon was spent chiefly in hard driving. It was a long way to Briançon and they had lingered in Embrun. Instead of driving at twenty-five miles an hour, Bancroft drove at forty and had little time for talking.

The sun was near its setting when they got in front of Briançon and saw perched high above them the famous mountain town, the highest town in France. As they came nearer, they noticed that all the mountain peaks about it were fortified. Briançon is a great frontier fortress—with Metz and Strasbourg and Belfort the greatest fortress in the world. It had grown cold, and without asking leave Bancroft stopped the car and got out

a rug and wrapped it about his companion's legs and feet. He couldn't help doing it as tenderly as possible. He turned rapidly and went round the car to climb in again. Neither spoke; they did not even look at each other.

Miss Jenny, indeed, was a little vexed to find an unexpected thrill in what was after all, a mere courtesy, she said to herself, and Bancroft felt embarrassed, as if the act had been too palpable an avowal.

As the car gathered speed, he felt he must say something to bring feeling down to normal levels.

"Victor Hugo was born in Besançon," he said; "he should have been born here—a fit birthplace for a great poet, a hawk's eyrie in a mountain pass, with snows and rocky peaks against the sky."

He looked at her with studied carelessness; but his heart contracted violently, for in the rosy light her face was transfigured, and he was seized with emotion on realizing how lovely she was—every way desirable. . . .

CHAPTER VIII

LOVE should be studied as the botanist studies fruit trees; each particular specimen differs from every other but all follow general laws of growth; the seed may be planted or may take root by chance; in sunshine and warmth the leaves bourgeon and thrill into flower and the flower falls odorously, petal by petal, revealing the fruit.

Though neither of them was at all aware of it, both Bancroft and Miss Foxwell were rapidly approaching a point which in the future would stand as a landmark.

As soon as they were settled in the hotel, Mr. Foxwell took his daughter for a stroll up the steep streets; a great fort crowned the peak on which the town was built; but soldiers were posted to prevent them going beyond a certain point. The town, they decided, was quaint but uninteresting, though the views from it into the valley below were magnificent.

Miss Jenny concluded that the interest everywhere came through Bancroft; it was all dull and stale without him, she felt; yet took herself to task for the obsession.

"I'm always thinking about him," she said to herself; "but I don't care for him at all; he excites me, and what

he says to me moves me because I've never heard anyone talk so before, but that isn't caring."

The thought dawned on her for the first time that he was perhaps a great man, might do great things; it fluttered her to deeper interest.

Meanwhile as soon as his work was done and his dinner eaten, Bancroft sat in judgment on himself.

"This must stop," he said decisively, as if talking to a third person, "right here; it's all nonsense—and bad nonsense," he added quickly; "you've not seen a generous, sweet instinct in her; she's just young and pretty and rather clever and desirable and that's all; she says herself she's a 'climber' like her mother, and if you let yourself go, you'll get snubbed for your pains. Now don't be a fool; don't sit here reading; that'll mean thinking of her, like holding a savory dish under the nose of a hungry man; get out to a café and talk or flirt; do something and don't think, and to-morrow see how well you can drive and leave these society insects to prey on each other."

But good resolutions, even when they are acted on, have sometimes the very opposite effect to what is intended. Bancroft went out and wandered from café to café; he soon noticed that when he talked about art and poetry, or even about the natural beauty of the place, the French grocermen were at a loss what to say; they affected some interest, it is true, felt vaguely annoyed that their ignorance should be divined; but that was all. English shopkeepers, on the other hand, would have

been proud of their indifference, regarding art and especially poetry as something childish and contemptible.

Later, he turned into a *café-chantant* and heard some risky songs and saw some posturing that did not even interest him. The amusements were tiresome to yawning; he preferred to go out and walk along the side of the steep ravine that led up the pass, and listen to the mountain torrent. He soon reached the watershed; then he turned and walked back to the hotel, while the moon, which had risen like a great pink ball through the mist, was now floating, primrose pale, in the purple south. He would not think, but every time his vagrant thought ran back to her, he was conscious of a thrill of pleasure and he had to pull himself up with an effort, "like a dog," he said to himself angrily, "running to a bone."

That evening Mr. and Mrs. Foxwell had a talk. Mrs. Foxwell had noticed the growing interest the pair seemed to take in each other, had noticed, too, that Bancroft stopped the car to put a rug about her daughter, and the mere fact that it was all done in silence filled the wily matron with suspicion. She determined to put an abrupt end to the affair. She knew her husband extremely well, knew that if she said anything about Jenny all his sympathies would be enlisted in the girl's defense. It was characteristic of her that she chose her time and mode of attack cleverly. It was in their bedroom where they had gone very soon after dinner.

"What do you think of Mr. Bancroft?" she remarked, as if puzzled.

"I like him," replied Mr. Foxwell; "I shouldn't be surprised if he did something big. He has ability, knows a good deal and talks well."

"It would be a pity, wouldn't it, Henry, if he were to fall in love with Jenny?"

"I don't think Jenny's likely to care for him," replied Mr. Foxwell slowly.

"It isn't that," insisted Mrs. Foxwell, "Jenny's all right; she has the very man she wants in Lord Favershall; but don't you think it would be wise to give Mr. Bancroft a hint, tell him she's engaged?"

"But is she?" queried Mr. Foxwell; "she didn't accept Favershall, did she?"

"He's asked her to marry him," Mrs. Foxwell persisted, "and when a girl like Jenny doesn't say 'no,' she means 'yes.'"

"That's probably true," said Mr. Foxwell doubtfully, having heard or read something of the sort.

"If I were you," the lady went on, "I'd give Mr. Bancroft a hint; it's only fair to him."

"It would seem impertinent of me, wouldn't it?" replied Mr. Foxwell, a little reluctantly. "Not that I mind that," he added with the quick instinct of the man of action to run towards the unpleasant thing to be done. and not away from it. "When should I do it? Is there any hurry?"

"I'd take any opportunity," she said; "the sooner the better."

"Would Jenny wish me to?" demurred the father;

"she doesn't like to be interfered with any more than I do."

"Would I ask you to do anything," exclaimed Mrs. Foxwell with an injured air, "if I didn't know that it was what Jenny wanted?"

"Oh, all right then," replied Mr. Foxwell; "I'll do it as well as I can," and at once dismissed the matter from mind as decided.

The drive from Briançon to the great pass des Lauterets was all dominated to the young pair by their good resolutions. Jenny took refuge in talking about the scenery; Bancroft tried again and again for miles to drive his car to an inch, here over a leaf, there over a small pebble; but whenever he forgot his resolve for a moment, his eyes stole back to her. When she first came out and sat beside him he was thrilled; she was new to him—always new; he noticed with a throb that her dress outlined her figure, discovered its exquisite symmetry. He had often admired her vaguely, from the natty blue motor bonnet fringed with lace, which set off the auburn hair, down to her little daintily-shod feet. But now her person as a whole was revealed to him; the daily companionship had taught him every line and curve of her body. He could have shut his eyes and drawn the little ear and the exquisite rhythm of neck and throat. Without looking at her he could have modeled the small bust and girlish slight waist, the little hands, the wrist in which you could hardly see the tiny bone. He was suddenly astonished by the thousand ways her figure

appealed to him and held him. "I made up my mind," he said to himself, "only just in time," and kept himself to commonplaces as she did; but the restraint was not pleasant or easy.

Was it the scenery or the propinquity that brought them further? The road wound steadily up to the pass; loop after loop of it took them higher till they came into patches of snow and then a continuous field of it, white ridges banking the muddy road; a small plateau, a bare wooden hut or two and they were on the top of the pass. They could look down the valley they had left and forward down the valley that was to become memorable to them, the valley of the Romanche. They had lost the blue skies and climbed to leaden menace; the scenery about them was Alpine, wintry; with its own wild bleak majesty.

On the left hand a great peak, the staves of it, so to speak, all black, the furrows and crevasses of it filled in with snow and the top of it lost in threatening gray clouds; on the right a great bastion, its shoulders half hidden by rolling cloud-masses; before them a valley running down through shelving fields of snow. . . .

Almost without a word they got into the car again, and began to glide down the slope. For the first two or three miles the scenery was wild, repellant in bleakness; but as the snow receded up the mountains, the impression changed. The car ran so smoothly and noiselessly that one seemed to be floating down the valley, and the impression of downward drifting was suggested inevit-

ably by the fact that the mountains on either hand seemed to grow higher and higher. And they were growing higher rapidly, for the car was descending nearly two thousand feet every half hour; soon they passed into summer, sunshine about them and the song of birds and the music of falling waters, scene after scene of changing loveliness.

It was as if nature had determined at length to make a masterpiece. The valley gradually narrowed to a gorge more magnificent than that of Daluis. There, after all, were only cliffs and great hills, but here in the High Alps were giant mountains draped always in snow, rocky bastions and precipices of thousands of feet, waterfalls of such height that the stream before it reached the ground drifted into veils of mist and vanished in the viewless air. One mountain of incomparable majesty towered twelve or thirteen thousand feet up to the left and was gradually seen to be rather a range than a mountain, giving with every turn of the road new views. Now they were under the shadow of it and the mountains on the opposite side had drawn threateningly closer and they were running through deep gloom. A swing round a corner and they were in hot sunshine and the bright green slopes of the mountain on the one hand were balanced by a precipice on the other crowned with funeral plumes of pine.

Three quarters of the way down a tapping on the glass brought Bancroft to a standstill. Mr. and Mrs. Foxwell wanted to get out and move about and enjoy

the view. The daughter joined them and all walked about tongue-tied. The mere beauty of the scene made speech tawdry. Half an hour later they had got in again and were running down almost in the valley when a puppy belonging to a shepherd bolted into the road right in front of the car. By desperate quick swerves Bancroft avoided the little creature and the next moment was past it and on the straight road leading to the plain.

"Oh, I am so glad," cried Miss Foxwell, "that you saved it." For a moment the steering didn't bother him and the excitement had thrown him off his guard. He turned and looked straight at her; somehow or other their eyes met and got entangled. All his pent-up admiration spoke in his look and, in spite of herself, the power of it held her; she couldn't glance away. In a moment she didn't even try to or wish to. The eyes simply held each other as if they could never separate. Suddenly a jerk on his hands recalled Bancroft to his driving and he bent over the wheel, giving himself to his work, but he was all shaken and when he came on the level and drove home the accelerator, he was still throbbing from head to foot, pulses beating in his temples and hands, and at heart a sort of wild ecstatic hope lifting him, quickening, thrilling—"Did she indeed care?" the thought held him breathless.

CHAPTER IX

THEY stopped for lunch in a commonplace little French town called Bourg d'Oisans. Bancroft took them to the best inn, a pretentious modern place with a railway station opposite it, and everything as *banal* and commonplace as could be imagined. But they were all full of the drive and Mr. and Mrs. Foxwell both came to Bancroft before they went into the hotel, thanking him and telling him that it was the most beautiful drive of their lives. Jenny said nothing and avoided looking at him while Bancroft apologized for the common modernity of the hotel. The three went into lunch and Bancroft took his meal on the porch by himself. An hour later Mr. Foxwell came to him and offered him a cigar.

"Some small Coronas I have had made up for me," he said.

Bancroft thanked him and the talk began with a discussion as to where they should stop for the night. "Grenoble, surely," said Bancroft.

"I should like to consult the guide book," said Mr. Foxwell; "it is in the car, I think." And while getting the book he glanced quizzically at the pile of packages and said with a certain dry humor:

"I don't know how Lord Favershall will get his long legs in there."

Bancroft perhaps looked a question, for Mr. Foxwell went on:

"You've made this trip so enjoyable that Mrs. Foxwell is thinking of writing to ask him to join us—Jenny's *fiancé,* I mean; he's rather a nice fellow, but whether he'll come or not and when, I don't know."

The manner, voice, words—everything perfectly casual; but thinking it all over afterwards, it came to Bancroft that the disclosure was intentional, and the intention was disclosed in the quick glance Mr. Foxwell suddenly threw at him.

Bancroft was glad that Mr. Foxwell saw nothing, gladder still that there was nothing to see. He did not feel an emotion: it didn't matter to him a bit, he said to himself. He could have laughed, and in fact did smile with amused astonishment. He might have guessed it of her: did she not flirt at the beginning outrageously with Count Ruspoli?

Mr. Foxwell went on looking at his guide book and making casual remarks, all of which Bancroft answered punctiliously, at the same time chortling to himself with real pleasure.

"I don't mind a bit," was the song in him. "She's nothing to me, thank God. It was only the senses after all. So she's a 'climber' too, and means to be Lady Favershall; good luck to her!"

"I think it would be better to stop at Grenoble," he

answered a question quietly; "there's a good hotel there and much to see."

As Mr. Foxwell walked in to the hotel again, he said to himself:

"That was perfectly unnecessary, women are always finding mares' nests."

Scarcely had he disappeared when Bancroft noticed that the sunshine had paled and the wind grown cold; his mood had altered; the question had come to him: "Does she love this lord?"

"Yes," was the incredible answer.

A vague, strange uneasiness began to form about his heart. First he shrugged his shoulders.

"What is it to me?" he thought; then: "It's a pity that a girl should disappoint one so. Why should she be secretive, false?"

He was so young and liked Mr. Foxwell so much that he never questioned the fact. An older man, even if he had accepted the statement, would have regarded it as of slight importance, would have said:

"She does not care for Lord Favershall now, but for me," and would have redoubled his efforts to win her; but Bancroft had still some of the greenness of youth: he doubted himself and the impression he made on others far too easily.

He began to examine himself; was it only his youthful credulity that made him believe she liked him? His thoughts went back to the moment when their eyes met; her eyes had given themselves, or was it mere delusion?

No, they had yielded—willingly, too. Could a woman flirt so? The little demon!

In half an hour the uneasiness about his heart had become pain. He walked up and down the inn yard and into the road, calling himself names, cursing his weakness and fatuity, all the pride in him revolting against her deception; and behind it all bitter rage and, deeper still, pain—pain that grew to aching and sickness. . . .

He began to nurse the rage in order to still the pain. This was the same shallow woman who would keep a man up all day to serve her after a sleepless night through her fault—her mother's daughter, who would give her eyes to any man and no doubt her body as well. Suddenly he began to realize that his pain was not to be mastered in this way. Dwelling on her, thinking of her, conjuring up her beauty, recalling the love-promise of her eyes—all sharpened the ache to agony.

He must get hold of himself, he said, or they would all see his misery. They must see nothing—none of them. Suddenly he noticed a bad taste in his mouth; he had bitten the cigar again and again till all his mouth was bitter with it. He found a simile in the thing. "Take love easily," he said, "it's pleasant: take it seriously, it's bitter."

He went in and found a bedroom, in order to wash his mouth. He ended by putting water on his head, too; his very brain was on fire, blazing with anger and pain, sharpened by self-contempt. Suddenly he felt through his hand the cold of the marble slab of the wash-

ing stand. "I must be like that," he said to himself, and bowing down he laid his forehead on it for a time. When he lifted his head he was better. . . .

* * * * *

The thought that helped him was—"All things pass; this wretchedness will pass too. Yesterday or the day before it was not; to-morrow or next month or year it will not be again." The thought of the transitoriness of all our pains and pleasures brought him to a better frame of mind, and at once he began to excuse her.

"After all," he said to himself, "how could she have told me that she was engaged? It would have seemed like a warning—impertinent. She was quite right not to say anything. I was weak and credulous, mistook her interest for feeling. It will be all right soon."

Suddenly a knock came to the door and the waiter told him that the Foxwells were ready.

"Oh, just say," he replied quickly, "that you forgot to bring me my coffee. Bring me a cup now, and say I'll be round in five minutes."

And in five minutes he was at the door, as he thought, completely at his ease. He helped Mrs. Foxwell into the car, all smiles; seemed to enjoy her praise of the beautiful drive; got in quite brightly, too, and greeted Miss Foxwell when she took her seat with a smile that surprised that observant young woman.

"What has happened?" she said, drawing herself up; "what have I done or said? Nothing." Her pride was even quicker to take offense than his. Far better than

Bancroft she knew how much her eyes had confessed; to have her confession of liking ignored was intolerable. Her anger soon became cool indifference. In half an hour she was frozen to contempt. It was as if an untimely winter had blasted all the tender buds of spring.

CHAPTER X

BANCROFT never knew how he drove for the next fifty miles; he watched the road and steered the car with concentrated attention. He didn't dare to look at the girl by his side, didn't dare to think of her, for that would have called up the agony again. He simply went on driving, with hot eyes, watching everything in the road, seeing everything, too, even the dust that gathered on the bonnet. A few miles beyond Bourg he had to turn to the left. A quick glance at the sign post told him that it was the turning and he took it all right; but in looking at the post his eyes passed over her face. It told him nothing; the very quiet of it shook him; he had to make some excuse for his silence and preoccupation.

"We have a long way to get to Grenoble to-night," he confessed miserably. "I hope I'm not driving too fast?"

"Oh, no," she said, looking at him indifferently; "it's quite pleasant, I think."

The cool, quiet tones seemed to constrict his heart, as if that muscle had been taken into a man's hand and squeezed; the pain made him gasp. "I have lost her," he thought, and he seemed to fall backwards into an

abyss; he was sure at once that this new thought would be the chief devil to torment him in the future. He did not speak again for a long time.

But curiously enough the glance he had given her did something to help his cause with Miss Foxwell. The girl knew more about love, though she had not practiced it much, than Bancroft was likely to know for many a year. As he turned away she caught a look of suffering in his face which set her thinking. At once her thoughts went to her mother. But no, her mother couldn't have spoken to him; she had never left the room and she certainly wouldn't have written to him. Her father did go out to see him, but her father loved her, was discretion itself—in a flash she dismissed that. The mystery was insoluble on her side.

Was it something that Bancroft had remembered? Was he engaged, perhaps, or entangled, or married, even? Suddenly she realized that she knew nothing about him at all. Of course anything might be true of him, she thought; evidently a man of very strong passions left completely to himself; very young, very enthusiastic and a good deal of money. He was bound in some way or other—that was the explanation of his strange withdrawal, and her contempt for his changed attitude began to be mitigated by a certain pity for him. This vague pity just enabled her to make her indifferent attitude perfectly gentle and natural. Looking at his set face, she admitted now that it was very resolute, a sort of attractive ugliness, she said to herself, very virile and

expressive, though irregular. Perhaps that was why he gambled, too, to get money to get rid of the tie upon him.

He didn't care for the woman, of that she felt sure. His eyes had spoken too frankly his adoration of her; "it was a pity," she concluded—"a great pity."

Jenny was never misled for a moment by the idea that perhaps Bancroft had been pretending a love he did not feel: a woman seldom feigns deep emotion, and so is always apter than a man to believe in the sincerity of love.

The only person in the party who was perfectly content that day was Mrs. Foxwell; she saw that her bolt had gone home; saw, too, that her daughter had not guessed whence the bolt had come. She hugged herself with the thought that the little flirtation and its disappointing end would make her daughter more inclined to yield to Lord Favershall.

"All's for the best," she said to herself comfortably; "all's for the best." She soon had still greater reason to congratulate herself on her stratagem.

* * * * * *

They ran into the valley of Grenoble shortly before six o'clock. The sun was near the setting when they came to a level crossing. It was closed, but after sounding his horn the gate in front opened and Bancroft immediately guided the car quietly through the gate and on to the metals. Just as he did so he saw the gate in front of him slam to sharply and heard an impatient exclamation from the little watchman's hut at the side of the road. Before he had time to think what the ex-

planation was a train came round the bend to the right at full speed, not fifty yards away from him. Instinctively, quicker than thought, he acted; lifting his foot from the brake, he pressed home the accelerator, and the car sprang forward. As he felt the car start, he seized Miss Foxwell by the shoulders with his left hand and dragged her roughly behind him and held her there in spite of her resistance. The same second the car struck the barrier with a crash of breaking wood and the ring of smashed glass; once clear, Bancroft pushed the brake home again, and ten yards beyond the barrier guided the car to the side of the road and brought it to a standstill. Not till then did he let go of Miss Jenny, but as soon as he freed her, she cried indignantly:

"How dare you; oh, how dare you?"

Without a word he stepped past her and got down to look at the car. There was astonishingly little damage done. He had had great lamps put on in front, and the brackets made very strong, and these lamps and brackets and the wheelguards had sustained the greater part of the shock; the heavy wooden upper bar of the gate, when breaking, had caught the glass in front of him, and shattered it and bent the thick brass rods supporting the roof; but that seemed all the mischief. The next moment Mr. Foxwell had joined him.

"Are you hurt?" he asked.

"Not much," said Bancroft shortly, remembering that he had distinctly seen the wood come against the glass, and the long, white splinter which had gone into his

shoulder. He hadn't flinched or avoided it, because she was behind him. He suddenly realized that his shoulder was paining him. Mr. Foxwell cried:

"By God, that was a near shave! I thought the train would just catch the back part of the car—an extra coat of paint would have done it. Thanks to you none of us are touched; but how could they have been so mad as to shut that barrier?"

The explanation was at hand: the twelve-year-old girl in the gate-house was startled by Bancroft's whistle, and, seeing the car, thought the six o'clock train had passed, and opened the gates. The noise of the lever brought her father from the next room, and, seeing what his child had done, and, knowing that the train was just due, he threw the lever over and closed the barrier, but too late to stop the car from entering. Now he stood in front of them, overflowing with explanations and apologies.

"You must have come in the very second the gate was opened," he said; "as I heard the click I jumped back from the kitchen and threw the lever in again. I had only just stepped into the kitchen to take the *bouillotte* off the fire, because the water was boiling over . . . I don't know what to say; I am very sorry. If I were rich I'd offer to pay for the damage, but I'm very poor."

"Oh, that doesn't matter," said Mr. Foxwell; "I guess the damage to the car don't count, and accidents will happen."

By this time Mrs. Foxwell had jointed the group, and,

seizing Bancroft's left hand, and pressing it between both of hers, she cried:

"How splendid of you, Mr. Bancroft; how perfectly splendid! I shut my eyes. I said to myself, 'My bad luck come at last; I hope I sha'n't be disfigured, but killed outright.' I felt sure we should be caught by the train: it was touching us. I had no idea the car could smash through that great gate as if it were a match."

All this time Miss Foxwell stood apart, with her head slightly averted, as if she took no interest in the scene.

Again Mr. Foxwell spoke, and this time his voice seemed to Bancroft to come from some distance.

"Are you sure you're not hurt?"

"My shoulder's touched," said Bancroft, and he lifted his right hand, because he was conscious of some warmth on it, and, as he did so, both Mr. Foxwell and he saw that it was red—streaming with blood.

"Good God," cried Mr. Foxwell, supporting him, "you're wounded."

"Nothing much," repeated Bancroft, for he saw Jenny had turned and come to his side; "not worth talking about," he added strongly, though at the same time he felt as if the road were moving up and down under him in waves like the sea.

With quick decision Mr. Foxwell helped him into the little cottage, and, with the aid of the guardian's wife, soon stripped off his coat, and discovered a great jagged wound, made by the splinter all along the top of his shoulder; a bit of the falling glass, too, had cut his head,

In a few minutes some hot water and a handkerchief bound round under his chin put the head right; but the wound in the shoulder was serious and bled profusely.

"I don't think you'll be able to drive," said Mr. Foxwell. "Can't we telephone here to get a chauffeur from Grenoble? How far are we from it?"

"Six miles," said the railway man; "but I've no telephone here; there is no telephone nearer than Grenoble."

"If you will bind a towel round the wound," said Bancroft, "and give me a glass of water, I'll drive the car in easily. I'm all right, really; I can drive just as well with the left hand as with the right. And the blood letting'll do me good!"

Miss Foxwell could not help seeing that he was making light of the matter for her sake; but, strange to say, it was too conventional an attitude to impress her. She expected more than ordinary things from him always. Even when the conventional was the finest attitude it did not appeal to her much.

They bound up the jagged wound, Mr. Foxwell taking care, first of all, to pull out all the little slivers of wood, but it was plain, from the flow of blood, that neither plaster nor towel would be any good for more than a few minutes; the gaping cut would have to be sewn up. As soon as the summary bandage was adjusted, Bancroft got hold of himself.

"I'm all right, now," he said; "if you'll put the ladies in the car, we'll go on."

"But can you drive?" said Mr. Foxwell. "I could eas-

ily walk to Grenoble, and bring help, if you would rest; I think it would be wiser."

"No, no," cried Bancroft. "Really I'm all right; the little faint feeling has passed. Please put the ladies in the car."

"I only give in," replied Mr. Foxwell, "because I think the sooner your wound is attended to by a doctor the better for you."

Bancroft nodded, smiling.

Mr. Foxwell hurried Mrs. and Miss Foxwell into the car, and came back to help Bancroft.

In five minutes they had started, with Mr. Foxwell seated beside Bancroft, in Miss Foxwell's place, in order to give him any help that might be needed. But no help was needed. In a quarter of an hour they drove up before the hotel. In ten minutes more Mr. Foxwell, having taken things into his own hands, had had the car housed and orders given to a competent engineer to put it to rights; he had helped Bancroft to bed, too, and got a doctor to see him. After washing the wound and putting in a dozen stitches, the doctor declared that he would answer for his patient.

"He's young, and very strong," he said, "and the wound is a clean one. It will probably knit on the first intention, and in a short time he'll be as well as ever. But, if it had gone six inches lower," and he held up his hands, "my aid wouldn't have been needed."

"Can I drive the car to-morrow?" asked Bancroft.

"No, no," cried the doctor, laughing; "that's too soon.

You certainly mustn't drive to-morrow; I don't think there will be any wound fever; you are so strong that perhaps there won't even be much of a rise in temperature, but you must give the flesh a day or two to heal, at the very least. Meantime, eat very lightly, drink nothing intoxicating, sleep as much as you can, and in the morning I'll come again," and with that he took his leave.

After assuring Bancroft that they were not in a hurry, and that he must not excite himself about getting up or going on, and thanking him again warmly for his extraordinary presence of mind, Mr. Foxwell left his patient to sleep, and went down to the ladies.

His report was a good one, but, to his surprise, neither of them seemed at first to realize that Bancroft had saved all their lives. It was Mr. Foxwell who made it plain to them that nothing but extraordinary speed of instinctive action could possibly have saved them from destruction.

"Not one chauffeur in a thousand would have been in time," he declared. "When I saw the engine come round the corner I thought it was impossible to save us. I didn't know what could be done. But, before I could even think, the car was moving forward, and the smash came, and even then," he added, "if the gate hadn't given, the car would have been struck, because the train came on that line of rails. The accident might have been a dreadful one, and would have been, with almost any other chauffeur. We owe Bancroft our lives."

"Dear fellow," cried Mrs. Foxwell, "I do hope he's not much hurt; he looked very white, I thought."

"He's lost a lot of blood," said Mr. Foxwell; "his clothes were saturated; but he'll be all right soon. He talks about being well enough to drive to-morrow, but that's absurd. Even the doctor says he must not think of driving before the flesh has begun to knit, and that'll take two or three days."

Miss Foxwell scarcely asked any questions. She wanted to know whether he was in much pain, and that was all. Of course she had realized almost immediately that when Bancroft had seized her so roughly and had thrown her behind him, he had done it simply to shield her. But as yet she didn't know what to say to him; she didn't feel specially grateful, but then she never did feel what she was expected to feel. After all it was in saving his own life that he had saved theirs. Even her father's high opinion of Bancroft had not much effect on her; it only confirmed her own judgment. Anyone could see, she thought, that he was extraordinary; a few hours before he was more than extraordinary to her—much more. No act of courage alone or of lightning-quick resolution would put him back on his throne.

Naturally enough the accident and Bancroft's action were discussed and rediscussed by them twenty times before they went to bed. Death had come very close to them, and that consciousness is exciting.

CHAPTER XI

WHEN the Foxwells met next morning at early breakfast they couldn't help talking about what they ought to do. They felt that something was required of them, and, to do them justice, they did not seek to evade the obligation. Mr. Foxwell reported that Bancroft had some fever and could not get up. What were they to do for him? Something must be done at once, he thought. After all, he had saved their lives; there was no doubt about that.

"What would he like?" asked Mrs. Foxwell.

"The hundred thousand dollars he gambled to win," interrupted Jenny casually.

"Oh, that's too much," cried Mrs. Foxwell; "it's a fortune; ten thousand would be plenty."

"Is that how you rate our lives, mother," laughed Jenny, "three thousand dollars apiece? It's not lavish."

"Let your father judge," retorted Mrs. Foxwell tartly. "He knows better what would be expected of us; I'm sure I don't care how you decide." And she swept out of the room.

When the father and daughter were left alone Mr. Foxwell began meditatively:

"A hundred thousand is a good deal of money, but I

don't know that it's too much; but you mustn't get in love with him, Jenny, even though he has saved your life—that would be silly."

"I was just thinking," replied his daughter quietly, "that I must be very hard-hearted; for what he did hasn't altered my opinion of him a little bit. I suppose I'm very matter-of-fact. I love to see things and people just as they are. I don't want to fool others, nor be fooled; I don't want to win by accidents, and I don't mean others to win by accidents, if I can help it. Real values are what I want, every time. I'm not your daughter for nothing," and she studied his face, to note the effect of her flattery.

Her father smiled with deep amusement; her declaration of faith was his, and he loved the sense of intimate kinship her confession gave him.

"Now, father, about his reward," Jenny went on, "don't you see, you dear old daddy, that if I had been going to repay him, I'd never have thought of asking you to do it; for I'd have meant giving him a great deal more than your old hundred thousand dollars—see!"

Again the father grinned with pleasure.

"But, as I don't intend to pay him, why you must, and liberally; give him his heart's desire," she added a little bitterly, "and then we'll all be content."

"All right, dear. I'll do as you say, at once, some time to-day. The car'll be ready to-morrow, and there's no sense in putting off a decision once taken."

Jenny nodded, smiling, and went to her room, con-

gratulating herself that she had done right all the way through. There was just a little curiosity deep down in her as to what Bancroft would do when he had the sum of money he so much wanted. "Will he make himself free?" she wondered, with real excitement stirring at her heart. She could not help believing that he was bound in some way.

The family spent the morning as usual, walking about the street, shopping; in the afternoon the father gave several hours to the patient, while Mrs. Foxwell and Jenny took a car and drove about to see the sights.

At dinner they met again, and Mr. Foxwell had to report that Bancroft absolutely refused to take the hundred thousand dollars.

"He's not funning," he went on, "he's serious. He's not going to take it; says he has done nothing and hasn't earned it. That's the sort of fool he is. There are not many of 'em in the world—thank God! or where should we be? You hear of 'em often, but never meet 'em. He's the first I ever ran up against, and it's given me a sort of shock. I don't like unselfishness, so-called, or any kind of highfalutin sentiments that prevents a man taking care of himself."

Mrs. Foxwell quickly resigned herself.

"If he won't, he won't," she said, shrugging her shoulders, "and there's an end of it."

Miss Foxwell was silent, because much puzzled.

"Why won't he take it?" she asked herself in vain.

"If he's not tied, why did he act so to me? If he is tied, money'd help him."

The problem interested her the more as she realized that it was more complex than she had imagined. But she didn't find the solution—it was given to her.

Next morning they were all astonished by the news that Bancroft had come downstairs, and was now in the restaurant ordering his breakfast.

"Let's go down," said Mrs. Foxwell, "and have him eat with us; that'll be a greater reward to him than money."

Her daughter looked at her in wonder; social generosity was not exactly Mrs. Foxwell's weak point. What was her motive?

They all greeted Bancroft warmly.

"May we sit down and keep you company, dear Mr. Bancroft?" cooed Mrs. Foxwell, in her contralto middle tones, long ago praised as her sweetest; "we're so glad to see you up again."

Bancroft only bowed.

"Do you feel well?" interrupted Jenny, for she was really shocked to see how pale he was.

"Perfectly well, thank you," said Bancroft. "You are all too kind to me. I hope we're going on to-day," he added. "The fresh air and brisk movement would do me more good than lying in bed, absorbing *tisanes.*"

But Mr. Foxwell and Miss Foxwell were both against it, and, when they found out that Bancroft was not to eat even fish till the next day, though the little fever had

left him, Jenny settled the question by saying that they weren't ready to start.

Breakfast was nearly over when Mrs. Foxwell fired her second bolt. The first had been successful, but Miss Jenny's proposal to give Bancroft a hundred thousand dollars, and the resolute way she stood for her opinion, had made that astute campaigner feel that the time had come for a second attack.

When bidding Bancroft farewell till lunch Mrs. Foxwell said:

"You mustn't dream of hurrying, dear Mr. Bancroft; there is really no need. We all think Grenoble a most fascinating place, with the great mountains all about it and the two rivers; and they say there's a good museum, too. I could stay here for days. Lord Favershall, you see, is not able to join us at once; he wires me we may expect to see him in Dijon next Monday—that gives us four whole days, doesn't it?"

When her mother mentioned Lord Favershall she did it with such evident intention that Miss Jenny took care to look at Bancroft, to see how he would take it. To her amazement he bowed merely, as if the mention of Lord Favershall were the most ordinary thing in the world.

"Do you know Lord Favershall?" she couldn't help asking him in her astonishment.

"No," Bancroft replied casually; "he left Oxford three years before I went up; he had a great reputation as an athlete; he won the three-mile race, I believe. That's

about all I know about him. You said, I think," he added, turning to Mr. Foxwell, "that he was very tall."

"Yes," replied Mr. Foxwell; "six feet one, I believe."

At once the whole plot was clear to Jenny.

"Another of mother's tricks," she said to herself. "I ought to have guessed it. But how did she manage to rope father in, I wonder? That's what put me off the track. But, even so, *he* had no business to believe the lie."

Her anger against her mother quickly turned to a sort of amused maliciousness. Lord Favershall would not come for three or four days; she would show her mother how much could be done in that time, and Lord Favershall might perhaps regret he hadn't come at once. An impish self-will and coquetry sprang to life in the girl, founded, as they so often are, on deep, honest feeling. Bancroft had been ill-treated, she felt. "I'll make him take that money," she resolved; "and I'll be just as sweet as honey to him, besides, and make mamma wish she hadn't interfered."

At the same time, though deep down in her was a sort of unacknowledged joy, she was surface angry with Bancroft still for believing anything against her; it seemed the height of disloyalty even to doubt her. She was simply determined now, in high spirits, to make them all dance to her playing; she never asked herself the reason of her happy excitement.

Strangely enough her second thoughts confirmed her resolutions, though they were not so reasonable. She

had lost the first feeling of perfect confidence in Bancroft. For a little while she had looked up to him as something wonderful, but, since his change of manner, she had set herself resolutely against him. "He only wants me," she had said to herself, "as any young man wants almost any girl. He'd make me miserable afterward, and his imperious ways would be intolerable, unless he loved me with all his heart, and he doesn't. There is no great passion, no deep devotion, in him; no trust, even, or he'd never have believed that lie. Why didn't he ask me straight out about it? . . .

"I'll flirt with him good and strong; it will not do him any harm, and it'll enrage mother. If she thinks she won't be able to play the *rôle* in London and at Court, which she has made up her mind to play as a connection of Lord Favershall, she'll go nearly crazy. I know her."

Mr. Foxwell insisted that Bancroft should take the second *déjeuner* with them, and at this meal Bancroft found Jenny in a new mood. Very reticent, as a rule, she was now rather talkative, and paid Bancroft compliments with a freedom very unusual to her.

"Grenoble," she said to him, "has every advantage, except that you were not with us, and the consequence is one seems to have seen nothing. I'm sure we've passed houses and churches without noticing them, and missed pictures and things that you'd have made very interesting."

He smiled.

"There are things to see at Grenoble," he said, "but

not many. There is a crypt under an old church on the other side of the river, with little columns in it of the tenth century, showing that pagan art was never entirely forgotten. Part of the Palace of Justice, too, is interesting, and there are several things you should see in the Museum."

"There, I knew it!" she exclaimed, with a comic air of utter consternation. "And we've missed it all."

"No, no," he cried. "I'm quite willing to go to the Museum with you, after lunch, if you care to have me as a guide."

But they would not hear of it. He must lie down after lunch, as the doctor had said, and rest, and, later, if he wished to go out, they'd get a car and take him for a good airing.

"I don't care about the old Museum," said Jenny; "I don't believe there's anything in it that you won't be able to show us in any museum. I'm beginning to understand," she added, as if to herself, "that it's the showman makes the show."

In spite of himself Bancroft flushed with pleasure. That was exactly what deep down in his heart he had wanted her to realize—that it was he who made things interesting to her, turned the dull, lifeless facts of reality into splendid jewels by polishing and faceting them. He basked in the warmth of her kindness and thought, foolishly enough, that it was the accident and his protection of her that had brought her to the new frame of mind. He exaggerated her kindness now, and the meaning of

it, just as aforetime he had failed to understand the full confession of her regard and how much she had given him in a look. He only felt as if he were walking on air; the change from lonely despair to hope and affection was worth anything. He could no more sleep than fly. He went out in the air for a long stroll, and came back tired but refreshed, and slept ten hours and awoke in such perfect health that the doctor removed all his prohibitions, and said he was fit to go anywhere and do anything, so long as he didn't use his right arm overmuch.

CHAPTER XI

AN hour or two afterward he had persuaded the Foxwells to start, and, with Jenny beside him, ran out of Grenoble toward the north, along the valley which is so beautiful that it impressed them even after all they had seen. There was something homely and cheerful and loving about the little houses and farms on either hand; the great mountains were some distance away, yet near enough to add the magic of variety and a hint of grandeur to the happy loveliness of the scene.

Miss Jenny knew better than to approach her object directly; she intended to conciliate Bancroft first, get the right atmosphere, so to speak, and then induce him to accept her father's gift. With this in mind, she began to talk with an appearance of lively interest, which, indeed, she felt.

"Where are you taking us to-day?" she asked. "What enchantment will you put on us?"

"Now you're laughing at me," he reproached her.

"No, no," she cried; "I do think you a sort of wizard——" and, as if she had said too much, she broke off abruptly. "But tell me, please, about to-day—I want my pleasures threefold, in anticipation, in reality, and in memory. As a little girl I used to say that they were

best in anticipation; but then, anticipation," she added merrily, "had none of the drawbacks that used to follow indulgence in sweets."

"There are two wonderful ways," he said, "of reaching Bourg from Grenoble; but both involve long detours; one is by Annecy and its lake, with an excursion to the foot of Mont Blanc, which would take a couple of days, or perhaps three; the other is by Chambéry to Geneva, and over Bellegarde and Nantua, to Bourg; I was going direct, for I understood from Mr. Foxwell that *you* wanted to be in Dijon the day after to-morrow."

He couldn't help emphasizing the "you."

"You are always warning me," she said gayly, "against accepting second-hand knowledge—'only what we see and learn for ourselves does us any good,'" she imitated his deeper voice, "and here you are again trusting to hearsay." Did she emphasize the "again"? He couldn't be sure. What did she mean?

"You are caught," he returned in her own light vein; "there is still time to go over Chambéry to Geneva, and then to-morrow to pass by Bellegarde to Bourg, and see the famous church in the afternoon. It only costs twenty-four hours more. What do you say?"

"Clearly you want us to see Geneva and Bellegarde," she replied. "Am I right? But why?"

"Geneva is a dull hole," he replied; "but the drive over Bellegarde to Bourg takes you through scenery utterly unlike anything we have seen, and yet in its own way of a peculiar appeal."

He couldn't help advocating the longer round; she was fascinating to him in her new humour of bright talkativeness with undercurrent of serious feeling; he seemed to be getting to know her better, and he put conscience to rest by saying that after all the joy would only be for three days and later he would be the only one to suffer. Surely he might steal that much from inexorable fate.

And she, determined to make him happy, humored him.

"*Va* for Geneva and Bellegarde," she cried; "we'll snap our fingers at time!"

"Do you really think we may?" he asked, with delight threading his anxiety. "Won't your mother be angry?"

"No, no," she laughed; "tell her how that blue motor-cap suits her, sets off the fairness of her skin, and she'll be happy, for one day, at least. You don't know as much about women as about art, do you?" she rattled on, "or you'd have won mother long ago. She is inclined to like you, you know."

"Really?" cried Bancroft. "I thought she disliked me. But are all women to be won by compliments and flatteries?"

"All women love sweets," she said, "and I have known some men who did not dislike them, particularly if there was just enough acid added to prevent the sweet from cloying." And she looked at him slyly, with a wise air that made him laugh in spite of himself.

"What makes you think your mother might like me?"

"You mustn't ask me to betray my sex," she replied, smiling archly. "I know because I know."

"Is it intuition, or observation?" he laughed.

"Both," she went on; "we know things unconsciously and observation justifies our feeling and explains it. You learn from books and women; we learn from ourselves and men."

"It's the growth interests me," he rejoined. "How do we grow and why? What helps us, what hinders?"

"How strenuous you are," she cried. "Can't you take life easily for even one day? You're not strong yet," she added, for his pallor was still marked and touched her in spite of herself. "But now tell me why you want to go to Bourg?"

"Don't you know that the Church of Brou is there?" he replied.

"And what may the Church of Brou be famous for?" she laughed.

"A story."

"What story."

"The story of a woman's sorrow and a woman's devotion; the life story of a princess of the Renaissance; a story which shows that human nature doesn't alter, is always exactly the same. But I'd rather talk to you about Margaret of Bourbon in the church she built and near her own tomb."

Again and again she was on the point of broaching the subject she had at heart, but felt a certain tension, a resistance in him she hardly liked to affront; at length

she determined to leave her appeal about the money till the afternoon and went on with the talk, for the fact that he might be married, for all she knew, made her want to learn something more about him, and his life and his views about women. She naturally continued on the way already opened.

"You are interested in women, in history, and in books," she said, "but, surely, real living women would teach you more."

"I'm beginning to think so," he said drolly; "but feeling seems to prevent one seeing very clearly, whereas every now and then in history one comes upon a living woman whom one can see as one sees the works of a watch through the glass."

"You would have to know her love affairs," Jenny declared, "or else you would only see the outside of her, and you don't get much love in histories."

"True, true," he cried, "we only get the surface things and probably we men learn nothing about a woman except when we love her. A magic, tragic way!"

"One would think you had been through it and suffered," she probed, smiling.

"I have not had that luck," he said in a low voice, betraying a certain pain which made her heart leap.

"But you must have known girls," she went on, "on your travels in Germany and Italy and France, who taught you something."

"Not much," he replied. "I'm afraid I'm stupid where women are concerned; it's the divining spirit one needs.

As you say, I know more about books and art and men."

"The other knowledge'll probably come," she said lightly. "It isn't the sea to drink, you know," she added laughing; "we're shallow folk, we petticoats."

"There you are," he said, "making a class again; it's individuals that count."

"No, no," she retorted, "I think we're shallower than men; we have fewer interests and no self-engrossing work."

"All that gives breadth," he argued, "but not depth. Depth comes from the heart and I think women deeper than men."

She rewarded him with one of her intent, serious, smiling looks. This was the unexpected sort of thing he said every now and then that marked him off from other men to her.

Jenny got a lively impression from that short talk; it almost convinced her that there was no entanglement in his life, that his whole change of attitude had come from her father's telling him that she was engaged to Lord Favershall. But whenever she thought of it, she was still impatient with him for having believed the fiction so readily, not at all realizing that she herself was still more than half inclined to believe worse about him without any evidence whatever.

A little further on, the road began to get more frequented and the incidents of the driving itself occupied his attention till they reached Chambéry, where they

lunched. After lunch and half an hour's stroll about the town, the Foxwells came back to the car, which they found waiting for them with Bancroft at the door.

Mr. Foxwell declared he was not sorry to stop the night at Geneva, because he had a long wire to send to his trainer at Chantilly about some horses, and, when Mrs. Foxwell realized that, after taking the little round by Geneva, they would still be in Dijon by the Sunday, she professed herself content.

Bancroft took the opportunity just before she got into the motor of telling her that he had never seen so pretty a bonnet; its color suited her exquisitely. To his astonishment she took up the compliment most seriously.

"Do you really think so?" she asked, her eyes alight. "I've been wondering whether your Oxford blue would not suit me better than this—Cambridge blue, I think you call it. It is a little cold, isn't it, whereas the Oxford blue is warmer—at least, that's what I feel about it."

"Nothing could suit you better than Cambridge blue," said Bancroft. "Your eyes are darker, and it shows them off."

"You're a flatterer, Mr. Bancroft," she said, smiling delightedly, "and it's a shame to try and flatter an old woman. But, seriously, I'm trying to get all your English terms like this of Oxford and Cambridge blue, for I suppose we shall settle in England *afterwards*. Mr. Foxwell is negotiating for a house in Carlton House Terrace."

That "afterwards" froze all the light talk on Ban-

croft's lips and recalled him to himself, as if one had thrust a knife between his ribs. He helped her into the carriage, saying to himself: "Will you never remember, you fool!"

Before they had driven a hundred yards Jenny felt that the atmosphere had again altered, and this time she attributed it to its true cause without hesitation.

"Mother has been saying something again," she said, and she felt a sinking at heart; she knew, no one better, how desperately her mother could fight and how unscrupulous she was in choosing her weapons. The next moment she set her little teeth, for opposition always had the effect of hardening her determination.

"We'll see," she said to herself, "we'll see"; and at once cast about to accomplish her object.

"You are looking better since lunch," she said to Bancroft; "I think you need cossetting up."

"It sounds delightful," he said; "but I can't accept it under false pretences; I am feeling quite strong again. A little blood letting does no harm."

"That reminds me of something," she said, her courage inciting her to abandon strategy for the direct attack in which, at any rate, she would learn her difficulties. "I have a crow to pluck with you; why did you refuse the money father offered you?"

"I guessed it was your idea," he exclaimed a little bitterly.

"And what if it were?" she replied; "though, as a matter of fact, both father and mother proposed to do

something before I ventured to fix the sum, knowing exactly what you wanted. But does the fact that I remembered what you had told me make the proposal distasteful to you?"

He nodded his head. "Money between us is horrible to me."

"To me money has no importance," she said, "none whatever, and I want you to take this because it'll please father and he'll feel easier in his mind. As it is, he feels under a crushing obligation to you."

"But that's all nonsense," Bancroft answered, "there's no obligation. I had to try to save my own life; he owes me nothing."

"But you did save our lives," she insisted, "by what father calls extraordinary quickness, and he is a very good judge of such a matter, and you saved our lives at the cost of a good deal of pain to yourself. You might as well say you would not let us pay the damage to the car, yet clearly we must."

"The damage to the car is so little that it doesn't matter. But your father offered me a fortune and I couldn't take it."

He wouldn't say, he didn't even confess to himself, that the offer of the hundred thousand dollars seemed to him humiliating. He only felt that in some way or other the acceptance would separate them, and his pride and his feeling were both in revolt against it.

Jenny persisted. "As it is only a question of amount," she said, "you have given up the principle. We are

all agreed that you ought to have compensation, and the sum that seems large to you is not important to father. Why not give us the pleasure of feeling that you have just the minimum you wanted when you gambled at Monte Carlo and lost?"

"I haven't earned it," he said; "it seems like alms."

"Nonsense," she cried; "you know better than to say that. Any chauffeur would have taken it without a word."

"That's perhaps it," he said; "I'm not 'any chauffeur' and I don't mean to take it."

"But we want you to," she persisted, "I want you to," and the intent eyes dwelt on him, for this young lady was extraordinarily self-willed, and, having persuaded herself that her way was the right way, would not be barred from it by any difficulty. "I want you to be free," she repeated, "free to do the best in you; I don't want to think you may have to go back to America and waste years in gaining the money you need for your work."

"You tempt cunningly," he said, "but I can only deny you dumbly. I feel I oughtn't to take it, you must leave it at that, please."

"No, no," she replied; "you have no idea how determined I am. I know it's right"; she began, as if enumerating the reasons, "for father at once said that something must be done; mother, too, chimed in in the same key, and she is not inclined to be generous. I

know I'm right and the right here happens to be good also, does you good and us good, so you must take it."

He shook his head.

"To refuse us," she said again, dwelling on him with her eyes, "would be to show that you didn't like us. If you will not accept what is right from us you show you despise or dislike us, and that's not kind."

He looked at her in wonder, and suddenly his mood changed. That cursed "afterwards" of Mrs. Foxwell came back to him and swept away all his defenses.

"I see," he broke out suddenly; "you want me paid to break every link between us. All right, I'll take the money."

The quickness, the bitterness, the anger of his speech set her heart beating violently.

"He loves me," she said to herself, and the persuasion was so delightful that it went all through her and about her, inundating her with warm content.

"That's right," she said quietly, holding herself in, "though your reason is all wrong. You will know it some day," she couldn't help adding; "if you don't know it now, but you have accepted, and that's right, and I'm glad and thank you."

"What do you mean by I shall 'know it some day'?" he asked.

"Some day," she said, smiling at him, "you'll see that money is not worth talking about; but now let me tell you that this road out of Grenoble, with its quiet little home scenes, pleases me even more than your Alpine

mountains, with their shuddering abysses and lonely, cold snow peaks. I think I like what is homely and speaks of human life and interests and happiness better than the uninhabited bleak spaces."

"There is beauty everywhere," he said, "but to me no excelling beauty in nature without mountains. I don't know why, but they lift the spirit, and quicken one in an extraordinary way."

"I have noticed," she said, "they are like great men to you."

"They are"; he took her up eagerly. "They are; there are many likenesses between them. The mountains, too, are united at the base, but the heads stand apart and are alone with the stars. . . ."

"Is there anything to see in Geneva?" she asked, after a pause.

"Nothing of any real value," he replied. "Geneva was always ferociously Protestant and your Puritan hates beauty. It's all an effect of climate," he added, smiling. "The Puritan associates nudity with cold, I believe." And then fearing he had been too outspoken, he changed the subject. "Still, the position of the place is lovely and you'll get a look at the lake and at Chillon. It is all made memorable by Byron and Rousseau and Voltaire."

"Not to speak of Calvin," she added, laughingly. "I notice you don't mention him."

"No," he said, "we have almost ceased to think of him; we know to-day that his religious fanaticism was

mainly gout and he nourished it to the end by indulgence in rich dishes."

The idea made her laugh.

Nothing else of any importance took place till they arrived at Geneva, and yet the companionship had had a certain effect on both of them. It had made her more friendly, more inclined to accept her earlier estimate of him. It sharpened, in some respects, his sense of loss; he was always looking on her now as Favershall's betrothed, and always hardening himself to see her in this new rôle with her "climber's" ambitions all fulfilled.

CHAPTER XII

THAT same evening, after Mrs. Foxwell had gone to her room, Jenny told her father that Bancroft would take the money, if offered nicely. The father's dark eyes seemed to absorb her.

"His second thoughts," he asked, "or your persuasion?"

"Anger with me," she replied, for the kinship between this pair was so profound that they nearly always used the curt truth to each other, even in intimate things.

"All right, Jenny," said Mr. Foxwell, "I'll do my best to make him take my money"; and he smiled grimly.

Jenny understood his reserves and doubts, but, having enough of her own, she thought it best to leave them all undisturbed. Time would right all things, she hoped, vaguely, with the spring of youth.

In the morning Mr. Foxwell made it his business to catch Bancroft at breakfast.

"Don't get up, Mr. Bancroft," he said; "I'll sit right here, if you have no objection," and he took a chair on the opposite side of the little table. "My daughter tells me," he began simply, "that you're going to take the sensible view and accept my offer. I'm glad; that makes it kinder and better all round. You'll have money to

go on with your writing work, and we shall feel a friendly sort of connection with you—and that's good both ways, for we owe you more than money," and he stretched out his hand.

The frank, kindly tone in the man usually so autocratic and sharp, made an impression on Bancroft. He took his hand, feeling, as he always felt, that Mr. Foxwell was genuine, curiously sincere, indeed, and at the same time friendly to him.

"Foxwell always deals in real things," he said to himself.

"I wonder," Mr. Foxwell went on, "if I might give you a little warning, point out something to you, just as you might show me a danger spot in a road you knew and I had never been over?"

"Surely," replied Bancroft warmly; "I should be obliged to you."

"You despise money," Mr. Foxwell began. "Let me get through," he went on, "for I believe your contempt is absolutely genuine. . . . You despise money and you think I esteem it too much. Well, that may be true. I was brought up poor; a widowed mother who had only forty dollars a month as a school-mistress, and six of us. I had to work mighty hard at first for every dollar I made; it took me twelve years to save the first hundred thousand, and I made half of that, and more, in the last year. The first fifty thousand dollars were harder to get than a million afterward. I may rate money too highly, but you rate it too low, I'm sure. Whoever

despises money in this world is going to be despised by money—don't you forget it! He's sure to suffer till he learns that lesson. . . . The perfect middle course is pretty hard to strike in life. What I want you to see is, if I think too much of money, that's the more dignified, the more honorable, the safer way—see? When you refused the hundred thousand dollars I offered you, you didn't go up in my esteem, but down, away down. I said to myself: 'In spite of all his talent and power, that young man'll come to grief—he'll come to grief, sure.' . . .

"That's the danger place in the road of life for you, Mr. Bancroft. I'm over sixty; have had my eyes open for over fifty years in this world, and I've found nothing in it yet in which money doesn't help a man. You've got one hundred thousand dollars clear and a bit more—ten thousand more—so much the better; freeze on to it; never risk it; never diminish it; in a year or two you'll begin adding to it—that's human nature—and every dollar you add to it will make it dearer to you—that's human nature, too."

Bancroft smiled. The earnestness and insight of the man were engrossing, and his admiration, as Mr. Foxwell read his interest, stood him in good stead.

"One thing more," Mr. Foxwell resumed; "you've listened to my advice; now I'll see whether it has been any good to you or not. I can give you a check for the hundred thousand dollars, or an order on my bankers to transfer you a hundred thousand dollars in gold mort-

gage bonds of the best American railroads. Which will you take?"

"The railroad bonds," replied Bancroft without hesitation; "you are sure to have picked the best."

"There you are again," said Mr. Foxwell, grinning; "that's not *the* reason. Gold mortgage bonds on our railroads are all pretty sure to be good, but taking the bonds saves you the brokerage—a thousand dollars, or so; see?"

Bancroft smiled. "You have proved that I do take too little interest in money, that's certain. But, well, there's another side to that question, too. I think——"

Mr. Foxwell shook his head and handed him the order.

"Now, post that to your bank at once; register the letter, and request them to notify you by wire that the transfer has been made and the bonds deposited in your name. Then draw the interest; but never touch the principal, see? Never. And ten years hence you'll thank me."

"But you've the name of a great speculator, Mr. Foxwell," said Bancroft, smiling. "People tell of your risking all you had—millions—on a gamble, and now you advise me never to risk anything."

Mr. Foxwell's eyes grew hard.

"Fools' talk, that mush," he replied. "I never risked a hundred thousand till I had a million safe; never really risked a dollar; otherwise I'd have come to ruin,

like the rest. Risks are for the poor," he flung out with contempt.

The talk affected Bancroft peculiarly. It depressed him for some time; he saw that on some natures the hold of money was far stronger than he had ever imagined. Mr. Foxwell would fight like a wolf to keep what he had got.

"Will men ever get wiser?" he wondered, doubtfully.

When they started that morning Jenny seemed in the highest spirits and at first tried to lift Bancroft into unison with her; but she was soon struck by his depression.

"Why are you so serious?" she asked. "One might think you had had bad news."

"No," he replied quietly; "thanks to you, I have had what's called good news; but your father's advice when he gave me the hundred thousand dollars shows me that the power of money in the world is far greater than I had thought."

"Why should that depress you?" she asked lightly; "you're on the right side of the fence now."

"That only diminishes the number on the wrong side by one," he replied.

She shook her head gayly. "You can't always be thinking of the halt and maimed and blind."

For the first time she jarred on him a little. "The climber again!" he said to himself bitterly. "The hardening effect of a privileged position. But why should I try to alter it? After all, that's what she is, the daugh-

ter of a multi-millionaire, and the betrothed of Lord Favershall. What can it matter to me if the daughter, like the father, worships the golden calf?"

His tacit acceptance of what she had said rather carelessly, something aloof and detached in him, set Jenny's brains working.

"Now he's got the money," she said to herself, "he does not care so much for me. In spite of what he said, it was our money drew him."

The thought brought disgust to her, and pain.

And so the two sat, misunderstanding each other and both of them trying to be steel against the influence of the other. But they were seated side by side and the day was warm and the air light and gradually the spirits of youth told. Suddenly they topped a rise and swung down towards a deep valley, and the talk began again more brightly.

"The valley below us," he said, "seen from the other side is surprising. Down there, to the left, the Rhone comes out from the Jura Mountains, and there's a wonderful view."

A little later they reached Bellegarde, the frontier town between Switzerland and France, where the custom formalities had to be gone through. While the *douaniers* were verifying the passports, Bancroft took them all to the famous *Porte du Rhone,* a gulf where the river disappears underground for some eighty yards whenever the water is low.

After leaving Bellegarde they went up a very steep hill

and a few miles further on came to the *Defilé de l'Ecluse* —the famous gorge by which the Rhone leaves Switzerland between the southern extremity of the Jura range and the mountain of Vuache. This deep, narrow gorge is commanded by the *Fort de l'Ecluse,* built by Vauban. They passed through the fortress by a tunnel in the rock, and, on issuing from the gloomy precincts, came suddenly to a most surprising view. Away below them on the left the Rhone ran through a rift in the mountains, the cliffs on the further side falling almost in a precipice and from their side it looked as if one could jump into the torrent, a thousand feet below.

The wonder of it gave them a new thrill.

Their admiration of the magnificent scenery drew their spirits into unison, blotting out their differences. Bancroft couldn't help confessing to himself that every day Jenny's beauty grew upon him, every day he discovered some grace of feature or of coloring that he had not noticed before; every day she became more desirable to him. As she had walked across the road and sprung up on the parapet to look down the gorge he couldn't help admiring the lithe roundness of her slight figure; her height, too, the reed-like sway of her had set his pulses throbbing, and, as he helped her down from the wall, she felt for the hundredth time the strong clasp of his hand, and it did a good deal to restore her earlier confidence in him. Yet she felt that in spirit he condemned her; and her pride, her vanity, if you will, could not let that pass.

"What did my father say," she began, "that affected you so painfully?"

"It's scarcely worth talking about," he said. "Mr. Foxwell said there was nothing a man could do in this world that money would not help him in."

"Isn't that true?" she asked, after a moment's thoughtful pause.

"Perhaps to the generality of men; but not to the hero, or saint, or artist!"

"I see what you mean," she exclaimed, caught by surprise; "but one thinks of heroes and saints as accidental, anyway—and surely artists would be helped by money."

"I doubt it," he replied, shaking his head. "It gives them freedom, of course, but it's apt to blunt sympathies."

"I don't agree," she cried. "It must be easier to be sympathetic when you need not trouble yourself about the necessaries of life?"

"I'm not sure," he said. "It does not increase your sympathy with those who scorn necessaries, does it? It isn't apt to teach you how heroes and saints feel."

"You always get the best of every argument," she exclaimed, a little tartly. "I always know now when I begin that before the end you will pass over me like a steam roller, and I resent being always in the wrong. I'm not accustomed to it," she said, smiling, but a glint of annoyance spoke in her eyes and heightened color.

"I'm sorry," he said, smiling, "but you'll not be hurt often in that way in this world. Commonplaces'll pile

themselves about you like cotton wool till they bury you."

"At any rate, a soft death," she replied; and again he clenched his teeth and accepted the casual fling as a deliberate rebuff.

They said nothing more of importance till they reached Nantua and had lunch. For some reason or other that she could never explain that lunch was always memorable to Jenny. She had gone into the pretty, low dining-room rather annoyed with him and annoyed with her own annoyance. After all, she took the keenest enjoyment in the new light he shed on most questions. His every word was an excitement to the intellect in her. No one else gave her the quickening thrill. But even in the warmth and joy of this acknowledgment she felt a certain antagonism in him, a certain detached opposition, that left the bitter lees of anxiety in her very heart; but here, at Nantua, he was compelled to dine in the same room. The Foxwells had gone far along it and sat by the open window in the pleasant sunshine. He went to the corner opposite, as far away from them as he could, and, for some inexplicable reason that annoyed her, too. Why should he hold so aloof from them? She felt a certain bitterness about it and always before her was that proud poise of his head that drew her eyes in spite of herself; there was dignity about him, she felt. She resented the obsession of him, but always afterward she remembered Nantua and the fact of the obsession there remained with her.

Immediately after lunch Bancroft brought the car to the door. He wanted to get to Bourg early, he said, to show them the famous church. By two o'clock they had swung out of the town.

The road from Nantua to Bourg ran in wide sweeps upward for nearly half an hour, till suddenly they reached the top of the mountain-plateau. Jenny's breath was taken by the grandeur of the prospect. They seemed to be on the roof of the world, so wide was the outlook; the whole country in hills and valleys lay beneath them as in a colored map. They climbed many hills afterwards and enjoyed many wide prospects, but none to be compared with that.

They reached Bourg about four o'clock, and, after leaving their luggage at the hotel and brushing off some of the dust, they all got into the car again and ran along a commonplace, bare boulevard and stopped outside the low wall of the Church of Brou.

Jenny hadn't wholly recovered her good humor. As they were getting down she said to Bancroft:

"As this church was built by a woman with money at command to have everything she wished, I want to see if I can understand it by myself. . . ."

He bowed with a smile dawning in his eyes.

After spending a couple of hours in the church, Bancroft took them back to the hotel.

"As soon as you like," said Jenny to him at the door, "we'll have our talk."

In ten minutes he was with her again.

"I don't like your famous church," she began; "it's mannered and cold. Even the three famous tombs are meanly elegant and selfish; the richest is Margaret's own monument; the plainest, that of her mother-in-law. Obvious, eh?

"The only fine thing in the whole church is Margaret's motto—*Fortune, infortune—fort'une,* but she has put it over her tomb, she has put it round the font of holy water; flaunted it everywhere, in fact, as if it were the only good thing she had ever said in her life. I feel sure some man gave it her, probably Egmont. Now, is that the lesson of the Church of Brou, or isn't it, master?" she threw out defiantly.

Bancroft laughed.

"You've summed up splendidly!" he exclaimed, "with astonishing clearness and decision, and put your finger on the weak point, I believe with unerring certainty. But there are one or two things needed to complete the impression. The central idea is peculiarly Renaissance: her husband on the marble slab with all the insignia of his rank; but underneath Margaret sets his skeleton—that's how he'll come before God. Underneath her own tomb she puts herself again in simplest clothes, with only the little bare foot exposed showing the cut in the sole from which she died—womanly modesty, and becoming, I think."

Jenny nodded indifferently.

Bancroft went on: "You saw the little recess in the chancel where Margaret used to sit to hear mass?"

"Yes," replied Jenny casually.

"And the fireplace she had built for herself because no doubt she was getting old?"

"I saw that, too, though I didn't mention it," Jenny cried. "She could warm herself in splendid isolation while worshiping her maker; all a piece of stuck-up conceit."

"A queen is almost of necessity a spoiled child," Bancroft exclaimed; "and another curious thing," he added, "did you notice that the windows in the front part of the church are left without colored glass?"

"No," she asked; "why?"

"Margaret," he said, "had probably spent all her money on the tombs, much, much more than she intended to on her own, and had left herself so short that there was not enough for the colored glass windows all through, and, in the four centuries since, no one has ever spent a penny to complete her work. There is a sort of tragedy to me in that contemptuous negligence of time."

Jenny nodded.

"I'm glad we agree," she said; "the whole thing is artificial, and selfish, and small."

"I'm glad, too," he replied; "and yet, Margaret's life to me has a certain pathos about it, like a vague perfume. Life had deceived her hopes of love again and again; she had been a queen in Brussels and that dark Phillip had snatched the scepter from her rudely and she retired here to build this church and to live with the memories of her youth. Fancy building a church on

this banal, commonplace site! There is something of failure and futility in everything she did, and yet in her aspirations a certain ideal, the vague, pathetic perfume of a woman's soul."

CHAPTER XIII

FROM her window giving on the square Mrs. Foxwell had seen her daughter and Bancroft walking about and coming back together. She had overheard her daughter's words to him, too, on entering the hotel: very little in their accord had escaped her. The mere idea of an understanding between them filled her with fear and rage.

She had made up her mind to go to London and conquer it; she wanted to speak of her "dear Jenny, Lady Favershall, you know," and pass the next years of her life in state. Her hair was beginning to get gray; powdered, she would look a queen, and the silver hair would set off the exquisite fairness of her complexion; her skin had always been her strong point, she thought—her skin and eyes and teeth and hair—it was strange, but she was all strong points, she reflected, and her figure was wonderful, too—everyone used to rave about her figure . . . and she saw herself on a sort of throne, surrounded by admirers and courtiers. She wanted high social position all the more because she could never forget the fact (which even Mr. Foxwell didn't know) that once upon a time her mother had taken in washing—the memory was a thorn in her side.

Hitherto she had always got what she wanted, and now—what was to be done? Would Mr. Foxwell help her? She was uncertain. He loved Jenny and had silly ideas about happiness and love going together; still, the attempt to enlist him should be made.

"I'm afraid, dear," she began, "that Mr. Bancroft is falling in love with Jenny, and Jenny, too. . . ."

Mr. Foxwell shook his head. "I guess not," he broke in, "I guess not."

"What makes you feel sure?" she probed. "She got you to give him that money."

"That's it," he replied; "that's just it: she wanted to pay a debt and get rid of it. If she had loved him, she'd have given him more than a hundred thousand dollars."

"Why did she want to tell him her impressions of that old church?"

"Swapping notes, I guess," he remarked casually. "Jenny's stuck on that art stuff, and Bancroft knows a lot about it. Make your mind easy, Mother," he concluded genially, "there ain't no love there—not a bit!"

"But if there was," she persisted, "you wouldn't consent, would you? A *chauffeur*—and Jenny!"

"Why not?" and he looked at her with the humorous gleam she disliked so in his eyes; "why not? he has youth, health, education; he's a gentleman, better brought up than I was; why should we object, if Jenny wanted him?"

"Girls want the first man they meet," she cried disdainfully; "what does a girl know . . ."

"You used to tell me," he interrupted carelessly, "that girls wanted Mr. Right, and I guess Jenny knows pretty well what she wants. Let's leave all that——" he broke off; "you're worrying yourself for nothin'," and he strolled out.

"No help there!" concluded Mrs. Foxwell; but, though she felt alarmed, she had a good deal of faith in her husband's shrewdness, and he spoke very decidedly. He knew Jenny, too, very well. She would wait and watch, she said to herself, and take care to accompany her daughter to every sight in future, and judge Bancroft's talk for herself. Besides, Lord Favershall would meet them in two days at Dijon, and he would be a powerful ally.

As they gathered in front of the hotel Mrs. Foxwell wanted to know from Bancroft where they were going, and if there was anything remarkable on the road.

"Nothing," he said, "and, as we are starting early, I hope to get to Beaune in time for lunch, for, really, you must spend the whole afternoon at the Hostel Dieu."

"What is that?" she said.

"'God's Hotel'," he replied, "the beautiful French name for a hospital or almshouse, and at Beaune is one of the greatest and most beautiful in the world."

"Do tell us about it," cried Mrs. Foxwell excitedly. "I'd much rather hear than read about things; they seem so much more real!"

"The charity was founded in the fifteenth century,"

said Bancroft, "by a Chancellor of Burgundy, who endowed it with vine lands in the neighborhood. The product of these vineyards has steadily grown in value, so that what was once a modest benefaction has now become enormously rich. The Chancellor was filled with all the aristocratic ideas of his time, and he put the management of this hospital in the care of Sisters chosen from the noblest families in Burgundy."

"Rather risky—that," said Mr. Foxwell quietly; "women haven't the business sense."

"These women," replied Bancroft, "have shown incomparable wisdom and fidelity. The old house of the fifteenth century has been preserved exactly as it was—a wonder of a place. As their revenue has grown, the Sisters have added another house and court, but the original chapel is there, and the beds are careful copies of the original beds; the colored hangings even are of the same texture as they were—everything as it was five centuries ago. The sisters wear the same costumes that their prototypes wore—white in summer and blue in winter. The head now is a lady of great tact and dignity. There are resident doctors in the place and a surgeon and all the latest appliances."

Mr. Foxwell shrugged his shoulders, as if a little incredulous.

"You make me very curious," cried Mrs. Foxwell; "do tell us everything. Are the costumes becoming?"

"You shall see," he said, as he helped her into the car. "It's all wonderful; you must judge for yourself."

"I'm sure I'll just love the Sisters and their quaint old house and everything," she replied with girlish abandon.

The enthusiasm with which he had spoken affected Mrs. Foxwell very differently when she thought it over. In the carriage she said to herself: "If he talks like that to Jenny he'll win her." It annoyed Mrs. Foxwell to feel Lord Favershall's chances diminishing. She began to wish that they had never seen Bancroft.

The driving was very easy, the road quite straight and smooth, as only French roads are. The day was a perfect day in early summer. It would have been a little too hot anywhere except on this Burgundy plateau, which is, even at Beaune, six or seven hundred feet above the sea. The air had a briskness in it that was exhilarating.

"How enthusiastic you are!" cried Jenny, after they had left the town behind. "But your admiration excited a certain opposition in me," she added mischievously. She felt her mother's eyes on her all the time and she was determined to show her how intimate they were.

"I think your praise of the Church at Brou made me want to find faults in it. Your praise of this Hostel Dieu, too, makes me a little antagonistic. That's mean of me; I'm ashamed of it, but I feel it."

"We are all inclined to criticise passions that we don't feel." His quiet tone of resignation filled her with fear.

"You must not say that," she took him up sharply. "I felt everything you said and all your enthusiasm. But I don't see anything wonderful in what has been

done; I don't see anything that anyone couldn't do just as well."

"There's so little done that's good in the world," he replied sadly. "Why are there not hundreds of such institutions?" he continued. "There ought to be dozens of them in every country, but there is only one Hostel Dieu in all France, and none that I know of in England or America.

"The only charity in England that I can think of as comparable to it is the one so lauded by Thackeray, the poor brethren of the Charterhouse. But go and see them. There is something mean and decayed and poverty-stricken about their life; compare even the building with this Hostel Dieu, and you will be compelled to say that the piety here is sweeter, the management wiser and more kindly. If I were asked for a proof that women can govern as nobly as men I would instance this Hostel Dieu at Beaune, and defy anyone to show me a charity administered by men with such honesty, such self-sacrifice, such cheerful wisdom."

"You really think," she queried, "that women are as capable of governing as men?"

"Indeed I do!" he exclaimed warmly. "They govern myriads of homes better than men govern them. They make money go farther, spend it more wisely. They will be admitted more and more to equality with men, and the sooner the better, it seems to me. But I am very curious, indeed, to see what you'll think of the Hostel Dieu."

"When you inflame one's ideas so much one is apt to be disappointed," she said, "chilled with the reality."

"Why not use the warmth to get warmer still?" he asked.

"The spirit of opposition," she replied, "which I am always finding in myself, and you never seem to feel. . . . You are always the creator and not the critic," she added, looking at him intently.

All this while her looks to him were the best part of her conversation. She knew that her mother would judge her by the number of times she saw her face turned toward him, and so maliciously again and again she gave him her eyes with her attention, and, in spite of himself, he drew pleasure and comfort from her looks, took delight, indeed, in studying the very shape of her eyes, noticing that one eyelid had a little rounder curve than the other; noticing, too, that, in certain lights, the dark rims round the iris seemed larger and deeper.

They reached Beaune early, and, after lunch, went straight to the Hostel Dieu.

Bancroft had taken the opportunity of sending a little note beforehand to the Lady Superior, in which he announced their wish to see the institution, and hoped that she would be kind enough to allow them to make a long visit. Going to the place, he told Jenny what he had done.

"I want to show her reverence because I feel it," he said. "I think one should approach her with something of the respect men show a queen."

Miss Jenny shrugged her shoulders; she thought the sentiment exaggerated.

As soon as they got into the great porch and had given their names, the old doorkeeper asked them to wait. He was ordered to announce them to the Lady Superior, he said, and hurried away. In a few minutes a couple of little round ladies came briskly across the courtyard toward them. Bancroft and Mr. Foxwell took off their hats. The Lady Superior told them that she would be delighted to let them see as much of the place as possible, but that a man had just been brought in badly injured in an accident, and the whole of the surgery would have to be shut off. Her manner was very clear and decisive, though courteous: "Except that part," she said, "you can see everything. We are only too glad if visitors find anything in our work to interest them."

Bancroft assured her he had always been intensely interested in what he called the most noble charity in the world.

The Mother Superior smiled at his praise and nodded to him in a friendly little way: "I have seen you, at least, once before, Monsieur," she said, and then took her leave, setting them free to enjoy the wonders of the place.

A step or two and they were in the great courtyard, and one glance took in everything: the painted tiles of the high, steep roof, the hanging wooden galleries of the fifteenth century; the wooden stoop, too, on which

convalescents were to be seen enjoying the shade; all the peculiarities of one of the best specimens of a Flemish Renaissance house—or, rather, château—to be found in the world.

At Bancroft's wish the guide first led them to the Museum on the first floor, where the tapestries of the fifteenth century are to be seen and the great picture four feet high and twice as broad by Roger van der Weyden. The inner panels of it represent "The Last Judgment," the pains of the damned, the pleasures of Paradise; the outside panels show the Founders and their patron saints. The whole thing throws an astonishing light on life as it was lived and the beliefs of men, five hundred years ago.

The Hostel Dieu was founded by Nicolas Rolin, Chancellor of Burgundy, and by his wife, Guigone de Salins, in 1443. The founder was even more intent on showing his love for his wife than his piety. All the reddish curtains draped about the place—and there are dozens of them—are ornamented with golden stars accompanied by the device: *"Ma seule."* Nicolas was resolved to tell the world that his wife Guigone was "his only star." And, after his death, Guigone, determined not to be outdone, represented herself on the reddish curtains under the guise of a lonely dove. It is all touching, or amusing, according to whether one views it with the head or with the heart.

After spending some time in the Museum, they went downstairs, along flagged passages, to the chapel. To

Jenny's surprise, the chapel was only one end of the great hall, the major part of which was used as a hospital. Each bed was partitioned off from the others and draped with the faded red curtains of the period. Back and forth among the invalids moved the lady nurses in their quaint, old-world dress; here two were in attendance on a doctor; there two others were helping a very old and weak patient to a seat in the warm sunshine; on this side, one was giving soup to a feeble old woman; on that, another was changing the linen of a bed. Everything was quietly ordered, perfectly clean, and very comfortable.

"This is all splendid," said Jenny, as they paused for a moment before the door, "but that 'Last Judgment' seemed to me too silly for words, and yet it was probably the fear of that which instituted this charity."

"The idea of the judgment seems to me true enough," said Bancroft. "We are judged by our acts every hour, and punished or rewarded accordingly. But it is during life that we are judged, and not after death."

"I wonder," continued Jenny, "whether the dim consciousness of that spiritual judgment will ever have the influence of the mediæval fear of Hell and the torturing of the damned?"

"I don't believe," said Bancroft meditatively, "that the fear was as powerful as the hope. Those great centuries of Christian faith were exultant with the belief in an eternity of bliss. Everyone was thrilled and quickened

with the Great Hope. That life of the Middle Ages, which is regarded by some moderns as so barren, so tedious, so dull, possessed nearly every interest that our life possesses, and was, besides, illumined by a sun which never set. The partition dividing this visible world from the world beyond the grave was so slight that the warm light of Paradise shown through and glorified all the details of the earthly pilgrimage."

The sun had gone down when they came outside the door once again and read the inscription, "Hostel Dieu 1486," with a new sense of its meaning and importance.

"What do you think of it all?" Bancroft asked Mrs. Foxwell politely, as they walked back toward the hotel.

"Fascinating," she said; "I never saw anything more interesting. And you say it is all done by those women? Their costumes are just too quaint for anything. They might have stepped out of old pictures."

Jenny scarcely spoke at all, and Bancroft found it impossible to get a word with her alone.

Everything he said Mrs. Foxwell answered, and before he reached the hotel he saw intention in her persistence. As soon as he could, therefore, decently, he lifted his hat and excused himself, and they saw no more of him that night.

CHAPTER XIV

BANCROFT'S reserve, his immediate withdrawal, increased Jenny's irritation against him, while exciting her interest and curiosity. When they took the road to Dijon, next morning, she was determined to be nicer to him than ever, in order to make up for her mother's hostility, and a certain fact made it easy for her to flatter him very cunningly.

"We had no talk about the Hostel Dieu last night," she began, "but you've opened my eyes to a great many things I'd never have seen, but for you. You have made the past live for me like the present, and I can judge its personages as I would living men and women. The Chancellor who founded the Hostel Dieu, I imagine, had a young wife, and died long before she did, leaving her to carry on the work. That device, which he put on all the curtains—the star on the reddish ground and the motto dedicating it to his wife—*"Ma seule étoile"*—show plainly the flattery of an older man.

"And his wife must have been a sort of meek English heroine, don't you think?—one of the milk-and-water type. Fancy her representing herself after his death as a lonely dove on a withered bough! They're really comic—those people, aren't they?"

"Very mid-Victorian," he agreed, "drenched in false sentiment, like Tennyson."

"Now tell me," she asked, "was there much more to see in the place—I mean, to carry away with one?"

"In spite of the silly sentimentality," he said, "the charity is fine."

"I suppose so," she admitted reluctantly; "I don't think I care much for charity: it's a poor, condescending sort of virtue."

"At its best it's like mercy," he said; "it blesseth him that gives and him that takes."

"Is there much to see at Dijon?" she asked, using the fascination of her eyes on him wilfully.

"Dijon's the jewel-casket of France!" he cried. "It was the capital of Burgundy all through the Renaissance. I've learned more about art in Dijon than in any other town. Paris is too vast: Dijon has just what one wants: it is wonderful."

"You'll show it to me, won't you?" she asked, again turning her deep eyes on him, partly to annoy her mother, partly out of coquetry; but mainly out of real liking.

"I will do anything you wish," he said, but he spoke with even more reserve than she had anticipated. "My mother has hurt him," she haid to herself, not realizing how badly he had been hurt. The father's advice, the mother's hostility, the girl's opposition—all, but especially the gift of money—had made him resolve to control himself, to draw back into the place of chauffeur that they

seemed to wish him to keep. His cool reserve affected Jenny, who was as proud as Lucifer, and couldn't help thinking what was indeed the truth, that since the money had been given to Bancroft, he had shown himself colder. She didn't attempt to put herself in his place and understand that the hundred thousand dollars had seemed to him like a final rebuff. She read the fact in her own way—that the money had made him independent, and that now he was independent he didn't care sufficiently to show that he cared only for her. Accordingly, she drew away, even further than he did, and the short drive to Dijon next morning was accomplished in almost complete silence.

Soon after reaching the hotel and reading her letters Mrs. Foxwell went to Jenny's room. Since hearing his talk about the Hostel Dieu, Mrs. Foxwell had begun to consider Bancroft as a formidable influence. She felt that his enthusiasms were likely to be catching. She was determined to counteract them while there was still time.

"Jenny, dear," she began, "I've just got a wire from Lord Favershall, to say that he'll reach here by twelve o'clock to-day, and I want a little talk with you.

"You know his family and position, and all that, as well as I do: I don't want to over-persuade you, but I do want you to decide nothing quickly or hastily. You don't know it, but one day you will—a mother always desires her child's happiness more than the child even can imagine—Lord Favershall loves you. I dare say you don't love him yet, but he loves you, and he offers you

great rank, a life of high position and social influence. You may not care for these things much yourself, but your children will care for them. They are lasting things. As Lady Favershall you will be able to go anywhere and do anything; everyone will be proud to know you; and those pleasures are always pleasures to a woman.

"Now, against that, there might be a narrow, small life, with someone who excited you, intoxicated you; but, after the passion wore off, it would irritate you not to be able to go anywhere you like and be received everywhere. The strongest thing in you, Jenny, is your pride, and that's something that's apt to get stronger the longer you live.

"Some women would rather love their husbands than be loved by them; they don't mind being door mats; you couldn't stand that; you would not be a door mat for an hour to any man. I want you to study yourself—pride is *your* mainspring as ambition is mine.

"Now, there is another thing: Lord Favershall loves you, but that's not all. He's a simple, kindly, nice fellow; he admires you—looks up to you. You will be able to do whatever you like with that man; he'll always be your humble admirer and servant, and that again will please you all the time. . . .

"Suppose you had another man who wanted to do as he liked (let's make a hero of him, if you please): just in the first blush of love for him you might be able to stand it, but afterwards you'd be unhappy. You'd fight

right along, and make yourself unhappy. Obstacles rouse your opposition—excite you to fight."

"All that means," replied Jenny, "that *you* want me to be Lady Favershall." Though she spoke lightly, and touched sarcastically the weak point in her mother's armor, still, what her mother had said impressed her. She *was* proud and self-willed, she knew, and she *had* resented Bancroft's imperious ways; she did resent his mental superiority a little. His certitude was humiliating, and, although his talent now and then gave her spasms of warm admiration, sometimes it was tiresome.

"Yes, Jenny," her mother resumed, "I want to see you Lady Favershall, but it is because I think that ten years hence you'll be very glad indeed that you took my advice."

"What a pity you can't marry him yourself," retorted Jenny mischievously, "then you would both be happy." She couldn't resist the Parthian shot.

"I wanted to warn you, daughter, that he'll be here for lunch," persisted the mother seriously, "and I've put out that blue dress for you; nothing suits you so well. If you'll take my advice, you'll put it on and, whatever you do, you'll remember—won't you—that Lord Favershall has come thousands of miles from London just to see you."

"Thousands?" repeated the daughter, laughing; "well done, mother!"

But the talk had its effect, as Mrs. Foxwell calculated it would. Jenny put on the blue dress, and, just as she

was getting ready to go down to lunch, a nosegay of her favorite wall-flowers was brought up to her with Lord Favershall's card. The slight scent of them had a peculiar effect on her; she had always been exceedingly sensitive to perfumes, and the fact that nobody thought much of the wall-flower, or esteemed it highly, had given it an added value. She had chosen it as her favorite flower, and was very proud of her choice, particularly when she found that other people always had a good word to say for it. The pride that apes humility always appeals intensely to people of great position. . . .

Jenny was touched, too, unaffectedly by the attention; she felt glad to meet Lord Favershall, and she noticed as she went down the stairs that there were no lees in this gladness, no disquiet, as there was always when she went to meet Bancroft, a sort of expectancy, with a tightening at the heart almost of fear—of distaste, she said to herself resolutely, as she went into the dining-room.

As Lord Favershall came to meet her, he thought he had never seen her look so lovely, for the expectancy of meeting him and the conflicting emotions had brought a little color to her cheeks. As she lifted her great, serious, intent eyes to him, his heart seemed to stop, and the thrill that went through him lent his manners that touch of warmth and abandon that they usually lacked.

"I *am* glad to see you, Miss Jenny," he cried, "and you're more beautiful than ever."

She was proud of him, his height, his dress, his easy

assurance of manner; she noticed, without looking, that the other people in the dining-room all realized that he was someone of importance.

"I, too, am glad," she said, "to see you," and her eyes held his.

As they went toward the table together he talked smilingly: "I hope you liked my flowers?"

"I thought it sweet of you to remember my preference," and she rewarded him with another intent look.

Then lunch began, and really it was a delightful episode. Jenny enjoyed it all, enjoyed Lord Favershall's admiration, enjoyed hearing the London and Paris gossip, the kindly chatter about people—enjoyed the whole thing immensely.

"What are we to do this afternoon?" asked Lord Favershall over the coffee. "There doesn't seem much to see in Dijon. These French provincial towns are all dull, with an awful *bourgeois* dullness; but we might go for a drive somewhere, mightn't we?"

"He's always wanting to do something," said Jenny's head to her, disparagingly; but she wouldn't listen to it.

"Jenny has taken to visiting museums and picture galleries," said Mr. Foxwell. "Our chauffeur, Mr. Bancroft, who saved us in the accident I told you about, knows all that art truck and spouts off reams of it, and Jenny always had a liking for it, you know."

"A sort of Admirable Crichton of a chauffeur!" said Lord Favershall, laughing.

"You left Oxford," Jenny remarked, "just before he

went up, but he knows all about your athletic performances. He told us you had won the mile race, and all sorts of things."

"No, no," laughed Lord Favershall, greatly pleased. "It was the three miles, I believe. I was beaten in the mile."

He looked so simple and strong and manly that Jenny's sympathetic feminine heart went out to him.

"He confesses defeat charmingly," she said to herself. She noticed, too, that his brown eyes were really very fine—that he was a distinguished, handsome man. His great height gave him an air, and he was perfectly groomed and dressed, without being over-dressed; and—"No doubt, to him, French provincial towns are rather dull," she said to herself, "but surely not this provincial town. Bancroft called it 'the jewel-casket of France.'"

But Bancroft's praise now excited her opposition. "Why shouldn't I profit by his advice," she said to herself, "and really learn for myself, as he learned? I suppose it is possible to go to this palace of the Duke of Burgundy, and see everything in it that Bancroft would see, or nearly everything? In any case," she added still to herself, "it'll give me greater pleasure to find out for myself, and to teach Lord Favershall, than be taught. At any rate, I'll try it; it'll be a new experience."

"Let us go to the palace of the Dukes of Burgundy," she said aloud. "There are wonderful things to be seen there, I believe." And so she and Lord Favershall went together and saw the courtyard, with the great well

in it; and went up to the noble guard-room, and examined the famous tombs—the finest, perhaps, in the world, while her mother and father kept discreetly in the background. In her desire to see everything Jenny just noticed that there were little alabaster figures under the tombs; they were "rather cunning," she thought; but she didn't get a good look at them, for she was hurried off to the fireplace by Lord Favershall's frank admiration.

"There is one like it at Basset," he said, answering her look of inquiry. "Of course, it's not so fine as this, but I think it's of the same time, or earlier, because it's a little simpler. The windows are like these, too," he said, going over to one; "I used to curl up in them, as a boy, and dream that I was a knight, looking down into the courtyard at the varlets and men-at-arms and squires, moving about beneath me."

It gave a little picture of him as an imaginative boy, which pleased her, and she was delighted, too, to find that he looked at the great Gothic pictures of carved wood with a certain understanding.

"Every scene," he said, "the dress, the arms—everything of the time perfect—really interesting."

Altogether the visit to the museum was a great success, and she noticed that the guide they had was very obsequious to the great man, and, when the time came to leave the picture gallery, the guardian told them most civilly that there was no hurry—that he could close later, "if *milord* wanted to stay." Lord Favershall's tip must have been a large one, for when they were going

out all the people were very civil—servile almost—in their attentions to them. It all pleased Jenny intimately, and she returned to the hotel with him in the highest spirits.

"Mother was right," she said; "he does love me, and it's very nice to be loved by someone of great position. Besides, he's very handsome and distinguished looking."

She dressed to come down to dinner for the first time in a week, and she put on dignity with the dress and jewels, as a girl is apt to do; and she swept down the broad stairs for dinner, for one can't help being a little stately in a train. And the dinner, instead of being a simple little meal, to be hurried over, was ceremonialized into a sort of banquet. The best table in the dining-room had been reserved for *milord* and his party; beautiful roses were scattered about on it; the landlord himself was in attendance, and, instead of the wine of the country, they had champagne; and, instead of finishing in three-quarters of an hour, the feast lasted for more than two hours; and Lord Favershall was really bright and entertaining, and told one or two rather good stories that he had recently heard.

"Very delightful," said Jenny to herself, as she went to bed; "a delicious, restful day!" And she curtsied a happy farewell to all disquietudes and strugglings and wild excitements.

CHAPTER XV

FOR the whole of the first day Favershall had been a joy to Jenny; he was such a change and rest, she said to herself; one was never forced to think, with him, nor feel; one just lived, and he was so good-humored and good-looking and healthy; and one knew just what he would say on every subject; he rested her beautifully, and she paid him with brightest coin of smiles and words. And he, too, was in the seventh heaven, for he loved Jenny as much as he could love anybody. "I sha'n't die if she won't have me," he said to himself, "but she's very pretty, and as clever as they make 'em, and I'd love to kiss her." He pictured her at Basset, framed in the old dining-room, and thrilled. "She suits me down to the ground," he said to himself, "and her money'll come in handy." Oh, he was really in love—was Lord Favershall—as deeply as such a man can love; and his tags of speech seemed droll and amusing to Jenny, and pleased her, at first, intimately.

In this spirit she whisked him off next morning, quite early, to see the Chartreuse de Champmol, and the great "Well of Moses," with the life-size statues of the prophets about it, and the famous portal of the old chantry, but here he was a little disappointing. There

wasn't much to see, he thought, at the Champmol, and the Chartreuse was "conspicuous by its absence." He didn't care much for Moses and "the other Jewish Johnnies," as he called them, at the Well. Altogether, the morning was hardly a success. His ignorance wouldn't have mattered so much, Jenny felt, but his self-satisfied attitude irritated her, and his flippant slang seemed shallow; altogether, she got a little out of temper with him. But still he did his best to be agreeable, and Jenny thrust down her dissatisfaction, and the pair returned to lunch together in apparently perfect accord.

In the hall of the hotel they met Bancroft, who bowed to them quietly, and drew back. But, as soon as Lord Favershall heard Jenny pronounce his name, he went across to him, smiling, and held out his hand.

"I'm very glad, indeed, to meet you," he said. "I've heard so much about you. I hope your shoulder's better: it was a bit of all right to take the gate with you at the level crossing, rather than linger, eh?" and under the cheery laugh and casual slang was cordial appreciation. "Miss Foxwell says, too, you are a prince of guides. I only wish she could say as much for me; but art's not my strong point, don't you know? I'm afraid I've bored her stiff this morning," and he smiled down at her, excusing himself.

Bancroft took in the whole scene. He had not spent three years at Oxford for nothing, and Lord Favershall's type was perfectly familiar to him. It filled him with disdain to think that Jenny had taken this lord as a guide

to the work of a great man—such disdain that he smiled with real amusement. The smile angered Jenny—she hardly knew why.

"Lord Favershall is not fair to himself," she said quietly; "he never bored me for a moment. We think of going to the *Palais de Justice* this afternoon," she added defiantly. Lord Favershall's air of cheerful resignation turned Bancroft's smile into a laugh: he would help Jenny with her admirer, he thought.

"Why not take the car?" he said. "It's a lovely day, and run out to the forest and Abbey of Citeaux? That would amuse Lord Favershall, and you," he added, a little maliciously, to Miss Foxwell, "might tell him about St. Bernard."

Before she could retort and vent her anger Lord Favershall jumped at the idea of a drive to a forest and abbey.

"What a good idea!" he cried. "Do let us go! I'd love to see it; the trees in France, I've been told, are the finest in the world, and I love trees."

Jenny raged, but said nothing, and Bancroft went on:

"If you like driving, there is much to be seen from Dijon—the great castles on the Loire are within easy reach."

"Really," said Lord Favershall, "how interesting! I've always wanted to see them; there's an aunt of mine who's always talking about them."

"Chaumont," Bancroft explained, "is not more than sixty miles away, and Chinon only a little farther. The

roads are excellent, and the car is fairly high-powered."

"How delightful!" cried Lord Favershall, and, turning to Jenny, he went on: "Do let us go to Citeaux to-day, and Chaumont and Chinon to-morrow. It would be the very thing."

So it was decided. Bancroft was asked to have the car at the door at three o'clock, and at three o'clock he ran them out to the Abbey of Citeaux; but none of them knew much about St. Bernard, and Lord Favershall's opinion that he was one of the "crusading fellows" didn't seem to make him more real. But the day passed pleasantly enough, and Lord Favershall's manners to Bancroft were quite perfect, Jenny thought; he deferred to him on many subjects.

Next morning they drove to Chaumont and went all over it, and then to Chinon. They lunched in a little country inn near the Castle, and Lord Favershall took it for granted that Bancroft would join them at table. The two men seemed to get along perfectly together, and it was with a little thrill of pride in Lord Favershall that Jenny afterward thought of the incident. She noticed, however, with a certain astonishment, that he was more frank and unconstrained with Bancroft than even with her father. "Is it the kinship of an Oxford training?" she asked herself, divining the truth; "or can he really appreciate him?" She was not left long in doubt.

The next day it rained, and the rain set Lord Favershall yawning.

"Nothing to do in this hole," he grumbled complaining. "Don't you think we had better get back to Paris? In the season, you know," he added, "Paris or London is the only place to live."

Miss Jenny began to feel dimly that there was a constant need of bodily activity in him; he always wanted to be doing something; he was like a schoolboy, she thought. But she was determined to carry out her program, and she had studied the whole matter up in the guide-book, so she took him first of all to the *Maison des Cariatides,* and then to the *Palais de Justice;* and he went everywhere with her, and did his best politely to conceal his want of interest. By lunch-time Jenny had begun to weary of him: warmed by her smiles and kindness he let himself go and talked a good deal; and his talk was quite intolerable to her. Commonplace succeeded commonplace; conventionality followed conventionality. She began to wonder hysterically whether he bought his opinions at a tailor's like his clothes: they'd have suited any of ten thousand men of his class. Was position good for nothing, she asked herself, but just to make one indistinguishable from one's fellows?

At table she suddenly burst out laughing. His words had come back to her: "Art's not my strong point, don't you know?" it seemed to her now intensely humorous; but she had arranged to see some churches after lunch, and the arrangement was taken for granted, and, as it was a little finer, she could find no reasonable excuse; and so she took him to see the Cathedral of Ste.

Benigne. She had to admit to herself in half an hour that he was not an exciting companion.

"What are we to do now?" she said, in utter weariness of body and mind, as they stood near the door in the empty church of St. Michael.

"I am at your service, Miss Jenny," he said, "as always, you know." And he took her hand and bent down and kissed it; and then, feeling no resistance on her part, he put his arm round her shoulders and kissed her on the mouth. She was too dulled, too empty of sensation, even to resist: his words, "as always," repeated themselves in her brain, like clods on a coffin, she thought.

"The first kiss you have given me," he said to her tenderly.

"The first you've taken," she heard herself saying, as if someone else were speaking.

"Could I have taken one before?" he asked, and suddenly the question seemed to awaken her, and she recalled her strange pleasure in meeting him two days before: "Could it be only two days?"

"Yes," she replied; and, so encouraged, he put his arm round her again; but this time she was alive and didn't want another conventional caress.

"We'll have to be getting back," she said, and he acquiesced, with his customary cheerful good humor.

"The loss of the kiss didn't affect him much," she said to herself; "and why should it?" she added, with a shrug, "his kiss certainly didn't move me."

As they walked back to the hotel he told her how proud she had made him: it would be the one object of his life to make her happy: she was a queen to him.

"Really correct and nice and proper," she said to herself, and wondered why she did not like it more. Perhaps she was too tired, she thought. She went up to her room to dress. . . . The dinner was another Belshazzar feast, and all the arrangements were perfect. He had even wall-flowers all strewn about the table, and he wore a little, tender, protective air, which sat well upon him, and her mother was in the seventh heaven; and over coffee they talked of great people, and suddenly Jenny could stand it no more. Her mother's delight was the last straw. When they got to talking of what Lady This said, and Lady That did, Jenny gave in. Pleading she was tired and had a headache, she went to bed.

Lord Favershall accompanied her to the door, and, as she passed through it, said:

"The happiest day of my life, Jenny!"

She looked up at him, and her intent look thrilled him, and he bent down and kissed her hands. But what she was thinking was: "Happy! Does he call *that* happiness?"

When alone in her room, she turned on all the electric lights, and stood in front of the glass and looked at herself. She was pale and fagged-looking, she thought.

She had nothing to complain of. Lord Favershall was as nice as could be. Most girls would have jumped

out of their skins with pleasure at the thought of having him for a lover. He was very handsome, manly, kind—everything. She had no fault to find. What was the matter with her?

Then she thought of Bancroft. "Why had he believed the lie about her engagement so easily? How could he? Damn him!"

Suddenly, without reason, she could never explain why, a wave of feeling came over her, and something seemed to clutch her heart till she gasped in pain. She couldn't stand it. She hadn't seen Bancroft the whole day, and the day was empty to her. She hated herself for it, but she wanted him; something turned in her; she wanted to see him, wanted to hear him, wanted to be near him, wanted him. . . .

"I can't help it," she cried passionately, "I can't help it! Oh, my God! It's like pushing against a mountain!"

CHAPTER XVI

THE feeling was so imperious that Jenny made up her mind to write to Lord Favershall that very night. If she didn't, he might say something definitive to her father or mother. He must be stopped at once. She hurried off the following note:

"Dear Lord Favershall,

"I was wrong in letting you think to-day I had made up my mind to be to you what you wished. You took me by surprise; you must give me time, please—time to think it all over. I don't want to act hastily or disappoint you. You told me how much you had to do in England, so please don't bother to stay with us. As soon as you get this, arrange to return. We can meet in Paris in a week, or in London later. I oughtn't to have let you leave all your affairs and hurry to Dijon at a moment's notice; it was inconsiderate of us. Please go back and complete everything, and don't think of me till we meet again, except as your sincere friend,

"Jenny Foxwell."

To say that Lord Favershall read this note properly would be saying too much. He had already formed the

opinion that Miss Jenny was inscrutable; in fact, her inscrutability was part of her charm for him—that, and her wonderful eyes, and her beauty; but this time he had made a good deal of way with her, he thought, and at the bottom of his heart he felt sure that no girl was likely to refuse him. Besides, it'll do good, he thought, not to look too keen; he had been bored to death the day before, with the old churches, and standing about while there were pressing things to do at home; so he decided that he would take her at her word, and say good-bye to her mother and father first thing in the morning, and hook it back to England. He was down for a polo match at Hurlingham, on the Wednesday, and he would be just about able to get back in time. "Jenny'll be in London in the season," was his last thought, "and then I'll pull it off." In this spirit he sat down and wrote the following note to her:

"Dear Jenny,

"All right! I'll follow your lead. I am writing to your father and mother, on the chance that I don't see them in the morning, to say I am called back to London. I'll take the ten o'clock *rapide* to Paris. I don't know whether it will be easy for me to come back to France in a week, but if you want me I'll make it possible. In any case, I shall look forward to seeing you in London in a month. Then I hope to make you care a little more for England and your devoted admirer,

"Hugh Favershall."

When Miss Jenny got this in the morning, with her tea, she pouted a little over the familiarity of the "Dear Jenny."

"I wonder," she said to herself, "whether he talks to most girls like that? It may be good form to use their Christian names, or, perhaps, it's just to show me that allowing him to kiss me, allows him also to write 'Jenny' to me. But it's nice of him to go at once without saying anything to mother." And, with a warm feeling at heart for him and his pleasant obedience, she pushed her toes out against the bed-clothes, delighted with the feeling of the cool linen, and, stretching herself like a cat, in the perfect comfort of the bed, began to think with a little thrill of expectancy of sitting beside Bancroft again.

About ten o'clock she met Bancroft in the hall of the hotel, and, strange to say, as soon as she saw him the old antagonism came to life in her.

He was so self-controlled and masterful; he was smiling as he came toward her. Not seeing her had made no difference to him, she thought bitterly, and the next moment she had a pang of regret for having sent Lord Favershall away so quickly.

"What are we to do to-day, Mr. Bancroft?" she said coldly.

"More castles, perhaps," said Bancroft smiling. She could have struck him.

"I hate this Dijon," she said inconsequently, "your empty jewel-casket!"

Then she gloated over the thought that her ill-temper might make him think that perhaps she was angry because Lord Favershall had gone away.

"A good thing, too," she said to herself; "he likes lies. Why shouldn't he have some more?"

"It's all so provincial," she went on, "even the churches meaningless, the figures in the porches disfigured or destroyed; noseless saints bore me," she flung out defiantly.

He looked at her and nodded his head. It was just what might be expected, he said to himself, from the future Lady Favershall. Yet it caused him a pang of disappointment. Next moment, however, he managed to smile again.

"Where do you wish to go, then? What would you like to do?" he asked.

"I'll have to ask father," she said pettishly. "I'll go and find him."

And she went and brought him back in a few minutes, and, as usual, he was very simple and direct.

"Lord Favershall has been called away to London," he began, "and we all wish you to make out our route, if you will."

Jenny felt a thrill of pleasure. "Father," she thought, "always manages to say the right thing."

Lord Favershall's departure was so unexpected that Bancroft couldn't help looking at Jenny. "Had she sent him away?" he asked himself, with a wild hope. Promptly the doubt followed. "No, probably it was her *fiancé's* departure which had put her out of temper."

"When would you like to start," he asked quietly, "for to-day's drive can be made long or short, as you will?"

"Just decide everything with my daughter," said Mr. Foxwell. "I'll go up and tell my wife, and we'll be ready in half an hour," and, nodding pleasantly to Bancroft, he turned and went upstairs.

In spite of himself Bancroft's spirits rose; after all, Lord Favershall had gone, and the main thing was that Jenny was there, and would perhaps come and sit on the seat beside him, and they might have another gorgeous day or two, and he smiled, as he looked at her.

"Suppose we go over Avallon, Miss Foxwell," he said. Her heart jumped at the kindness of his tone.

"A pretty name," she said, looking at him, and, against her will, their eyes got entangled again, and he heard himself saying, "and on to Vezelay."

Leaving her eyes in his, she repeated "Vezelay?"

Bancroft had to pull himself together. It was ridiculous, he felt, that a look should thrill him so—set pulses throbbing in head and hands, and shake his whole being.

"I shall have a lot to tell you about Vezelay," he said, not knowing what he said. "You'll be bored to death by my talk."

"I'm not afraid," she said, laughing low in delight; and then, with the desire to hoard her joy like a miser, and not to risk losing it through her father coming downstairs and cutting it all short, she added: "I have my things to get ready; I'll be back in quarter of an hour."

And, smiling at him, she turned and went upstairs. She was in her room, smiling at herself in the glass, before she realized how strong the pull to him was. She resolved to hold back as long as she could.

Bancroft arranged the baggage on the car exactly as it had been arranged before Lord Favershall came on the scene.

When they started he began:

"So you saw nothing in Dijon—found nothing in the jewel-casket?"

"Nothing but bits of glass," she replied saucily; "I'm half afraid it needs a jeweller to tell the gems when he sees them."

"The gems were there, all right," he answered; "and one big one."

"What one?" she said. "Do tell me."

"You saw the alabaster figures under the famous tombs," he said, "one little monk picking his ear, another blowing his nose, a third fellow stooping to lift his purse from the ground—a score of little figures—each a character-study of a living person."

"We looked at the chimney-piece," she said, "and out of the window."

"But you saw the 'Well of Moses,' and the Isaiah, the Jeremiah, the Zachariah—the finest Jew figures ever carved—the master-work of one of the world's artists?"

"None of us had ever heard of him before," she said. "Do you think Claus Sluter a great artist?"

"Surely," he replied simply.

"Is there anything known about him?" she asked.

"Not much," he admitted. "The Duke of Burgundy brought him from Flanders to design his funeral chapel and the tombs of himself and his wife. He worked here from about 1385 to 1406, when he died. He is intensely interesting to me," he went on, "because he shows that education, so-called, and especially foreign influences, are dangerous to the artist. Michael Angelo was profoundly affected by Greek models; but Claus Sluter developed harmoniously, like a flower unfolding from within, and he went far beyond the ideals of Angelo."

"Really?" she cried. Bancroft went on:

"He came into the world with a sympathetic, passionate soul, and curious, eager, seeing eyes; and he began humbly to fashion monks and merchants, with their natural tricks of habit, and great lords and ladies, as they moved before him; and gradually grew till he could realize the prophets in a few types, and at last portray the Queen of Heaven and the Passion of the Christ. Surely you saw his head of Christ?"

"I don't believe we did," she said, and he went on:

"The most wonderful Christ in the world. You don't even think of the features; no stress is laid on their beauty, but the twigs of the thorns are made broad, so that they form a sort of crown to the head—a crown with drops of blood as jewels. The eyes are almost closed, as if swooning in agony; the lips half-opened, as if to fleet the parting soul. The contrast between the majesty of the broad, crowned brow and the suffering

of eyes and mouth suggest the twofold nature of the Son of Man. This head of Christ is, in sculpture, what the face of Christ, by Gauguin, is in painting—a thing unique and wonderful, conceived in love and reverence, of an intense emotional appeal.

"And they have hidden it away in the basement of the museum, amid a lot of *débris* and fragments of statues, but, when they come to know that Claus Sluter was as great as Michael Angelo, they will put the Christ head on a pedestal in a room all by itself."

"Your enthusiasms are contagious," she said. "One feels as you talk that your estimates are right."

He paused, and silence came between them for a little while. He couldn't help pointing to the beauties of the road: hills on every side, with brown vineyards on the lower slopes and cliffs scarped above, or else wooded to the top, a sort of rich and laughing, healthy, wealthy beauty all over the high Burgundy plateau, where the sun is strong and the air keen and light. But Jenny could not be turned from the new current of thought.

"Do you think artists," she asked doubtfully, "greater than statesmen or generals, or men of business, or . . .?"

He nodded. "There's more to be learned now from one Claus Sluter, or one Shakespeare, than from all the statesmen and warriors since history began."

She suddenly felt as if she were lifted by his assurance into higher air, where the prospect was thrillingly wide and free; and painfully her soul began to stir in her with a passionate desire of life, like a babe before

the birth. She must know more, feel more, be more, or stifle. All her antagonism to him, she felt, had disappeared, been swept aside, like mist, by his enthusiasm. Though filled with admiring sympathy, her impulse was still to conceal her feeling, for she was frightened by the strength of it. Choking, she sought some safety-valve in speech.

"Are we going beyond Vezelay to-day?" she asked.

"To Sens, if you like," he replied. "But let us get to Vezelay first. If I could I'd devour the road."

Suddenly, as they ran down one long valley, he pointed out, opposite to them, the great rounded hill of Vezelay, shaped like the breast of a woman.

"You torment me," she said, gulping down the lump in her throat, "with your Vezelay. I never heard of Vezelay before."

"In the Middle Ages," he said, "Vezelay was the greatest place in the word, after Rome and Jerusalem. It was the home of the worship of the Magdalen; the great abbey on the top is dedicated to her, and was believed to contain her bones."

Soon they began going up the famous hill, and wound round and round, till one short rush up the steep street of the little village brought them out on the broad place before the church.

"In front of this church St. Louis prayed: here Philip Augustus, of France, and Richard Cœur de Lion, of England, took the Cross in the summer of 1189. There," Bancroft went on, "is the very place, no doubt; there

the self-same stones where the kings stood that Sunday morning seven hundred years ago, when they pledged themselves to redeem the Holy Sepulchre from the infidel; and their followers took the same vow, 'all kneeling,' amid an immense concourse of pilgrims from all parts of Christendom, 'who had spent the night on straw in the streets and in the open country for miles round, for the town was not large enough to hold the multitude of them.'

"All this church to me is alive with memories of St. Bernard. As St. Francis in the Middle Ages represented the Master, so St. Bernard represented St. Paul—of course, with many differences. He tells us himself that he left his castle because he was plagued with all the lusts of the flesh (*un homme charnel et vendu au pêché*); and, perhaps, for that reason he distinguished himself by attacking all carnal desires, and especially the luxury of abbots, the gluttony and lechery of monks.

"The saint practiced what he preached. He lived for weeks together on beech-mast and leaves and gutter-water, and with 'flaming eyes' called sinners everywhere to repentance. He conquered German emperor, and French king, and English king, and drove them all across the seas to war with the infidel. No wonder his biographer likened his speech to 'pines flaming on a mountain-side.'"

After visiting the church Jenny and Bancroft wandered among the great trees behind it to the edge of the

summit, with its wide view over the surrounding country.

"What a lovely name," she said, "Vezelay! I shall always remember it."

"The extraordinary thing is," he said, "that all this honor was paid to the Magdalen. One has to read history for one's self. They tell you it was the worship of the Virgin Mother that lifted woman and made chivalry a religion. Of course, that adoration did increase man's reverence for woman in an extraordinary degree. But the passionate devotion of the Middle Ages was given to the Magdalen even more than to the Mother of Christ. In spite of Christian hatred of the body and admiration of chastity, men adored this loving, sinful woman. The instincts of humanity are profoundly right: the deepest word of Christ was the word that much would be forgiven her for she loved much, and, when the desire of heaven was most intense, and the fear of hell most poignant, poor men and women took comfort in this saying, hiding themselves like little children, in the folds of this woman's skirt, for they, too, had loved and sinned and suffered, and they, too, hoped forgiveness."

"Mother thinks you very religious," said Jenny, when they found themselves once more in the car and out of hearing of their elders, "and really you surprised me, too, a little. You seemed to bring back the Middle Ages and their fervent faith."

"Religion was only half their life," he said, laughing, and, with one of the quick changes which was one of his

charms to her, he went on: "The other half was love, and they had gorgeous love-stories, like the one about the *Châtelaine de Vergy*, to balance the scourgings and penances of self-martyrdom."

"Oh, do tell it me!" she cried. "I want to hear it."

"I'll tell it you to-morrow," he said, "if you'll remind me."

"Why not now?" she exclaimed. "You drive me crazy with longing."

"The driving's difficult," he replied. "There are a dozen level crossings, and it's getting dark. The French, too, often forget to light the lanterns on their wagons, and an accident soon happens."

Was it fancy, or did she indeed draw closer to him, as darkness began to enfold them and shut them away from the world? He could not be sure, but he was penetrated with the sense of her bodily proximity, charmed by every chance contact. He put his left hand down once, as if carelessly, and touched her hip, and felt the heat of it for hours after he had left them and gone to bed.

In the morning, even, on waking, he looked at his hand in wonder, for his pulses were still throbbing where he had touched her.

CHAPTER XVII

THEY had only just got into the car next morning when Jenny began:

"I could hardly sleep last night for thinking of the love story you're going to tell me. Please begin."

"You'll hear it in the forest of Fontainebleau," he said, "this afternoon. I ought to have told it in the country where it happened."

"I don't care for the old forest," she cried, smiling; "I'm a child and want my story. Where is Vergy?"

"I could take you to where I think the Château of Vergy was," he said, "but there's hardly a trace of it left. We only know it was on a hill not far from here, amid high rocks shaped like a ship."

"Couldn't we go there now?" she asked, with her cheeks flushing faintly and eyes shining.

"Easily," he replied, "if you don't mind turning back. I spent a week once searching for the place. It's perched high up and the way is rough." And he ventured to add: "Mrs. Foxwell wouldn't like the climb, I'm afraid."

The girl's intent eyes held him. "Let's go," she said; "we can climb up"; and, in the anticipation, his heart began to thump and his mouth grew parched as with fever. He felt that the decisive moment was approach-

ing, that the time was ripe, that—the delicious trouble kept them both silent. A little later he explained that they could visit Vergy after lunch.

An hour after leaving the high road they stopped at a little village inn. Apparently, luck was on his side, for after lunch Jenny joined him and said quietly:

"We must be back in an hour, Mother says. Will that do?"

He nodded his head and motioned her to the car. He wouldn't lose a moment. He didn't dare to ask her how she had got away alone; but, for once, Mrs. Foxwell's acumen had played her false. Her fears of Bancroft and his influence had been sharpened by something vibrating, expectant, in her daughter, which had brought her to a quick decision. She must get to Paris at once and cut short these long private talks between Jenny and the chauffeur. She needed no one to tell her that Bancroft was attractive—the lithe, straight figure with the easy, quick movements, the strong face with the piercing, vivid eyes. She made up her mind to get a few decisive words with Mr. Foxwell alone, and, as soon as Jenny said she wanted to visit Vergy, her mother consented, but asked her to be back in an hour. An hour more or less, she thought, could hardly matter much; she had always been prudent in youth.

In five minutes they had run up the valley to Vergy. Bancroft stopped the car and the pair climbed together up the rocky promontory which thrust itself from the hillside right into the river. He led the way to the very

verge of the cliff dominating the whole valley and there, seated side by side on a block of the old rampart, he told the story. He began by relating how the wise widow, Alix of Burgundy, played regent for eleven years, till her only son Hugue came of age.

"Hugue the Fourth, it seems, was a hot-tempered man and, as the most powerful feudal chief in France, fought up and down his frontiers till Pope Gregory himself interfered and warned him to cease disturbing 'the peace of a happy kingdom.'

"Amid all his wars he found time to marry twice, and the story goes that he became hopelessly enamoured of his second wife, Beatrice of Champagne, as your hot-blooded men often do who in later middle life marry young women.

"At this time Laura of Lorraine was Châtelaine of Vergy. She had been married very young to a far older man. Laura fell passionately in love with a young knight of the Court of Burgundy, but, as her husband was jealous, she was compelled to prudence and had to find some way of meeting her lover without exciting suspicion. She showed feminine ingenuity in overcoming the difficulty. She trained her little dog to find her knight at a word, and, when her husband went abroad, the lovers used to meet in all security, and, according to the old chronicler, 'took great delight in each other's beauty.'

"It soon got talked about at court that this knight cared nothing for any woman, and his unwonted austere reserve excited curiosity. Some said he was under a

vow, others hinted at a shameful secret. Hearing the gossip, the Duchess Beatrice began to pay attention to him, and, finding him 'very noble and of splendid presence,' presently fell in love with him and took occasion to declare her passion. But the knight sheltered himself behind his duty to the Duke and declared flatly that nothing would induce him to betray so honest and kindly a lord. Feeling herself scorned, the Duchess fell to hatred of the knight and resolved to destroy him. She set about the work with womanly cunning.

"I should like to quote you the old French verse, for its simplicity and directness brings the whole scene before one."

"Do, do," cried Jenny; "I'd love to hear it."

"I am afraid I only remember the first three lines. Here they are:

> " 'La nuit quan ele fut couchie
> Jouste le douc a souspirer
> Commença et puis a plorer.'

" 'Being in bed with the Duke, Beatrice began to sigh and then to sob, and, when the Duke asked her what was the matter, she replied that she had been insulted by the knight who was sick with love of her and pursued her continually.'

"Next morning the passionate Duke called the knight to him and charged him with the offense. The knight denied it, but the Duke told him roundly that his life witnessed against him. He reminded him that he had

never courted any one, had never worn any woman's favor, and declared that it had already been whispered about that his aloofness was due to some unhappy passion. Having thus convinced himself, he concluded angrily that, unless the knight could disprove the accusation, he would banish and outlaw him, so that any one might do him to death. The knight, seeing that in that case he must lose his love altogether, resolved to tell the Duke the truth. So he related the whole story of his passion and described the little dog as go-between.

"Here, again," Bancroft broke off, "the French verse in its *naïveté* is untranslatable:

> "'Ses venues et ses alees
> Et la convenance premiere
> Et du petit chien la manière.'

"He told it all under the condition of the strictest secrecy.

"The Duke, however, insisted that seeing was believing, and, on the following night, he hid himself behind some trees and witnessed the meeting of the two lovers who had been brought together, as usual, by the little dog.

"When the Duchess Beatrice learned that the Duke was not going to revenge himself and her on the knight, she set to work to find out the reason, and, by dint of contemptuous sneers at his weak credulity, varied with tears and caressings, she got him to tell her everything.

"It was then near the feast of Pentecost, when all

the Court assembled after high mass to pay homage to the Duke and Duchess. At the great reception the Duchess waited for her rival, and, when the Châtelaine of Vergy came in with her husband, the Duchess received her with extravagant courtesy, and, drawing her a little apart, told her that she had long wanted to see so clever a woman, who had managed by tricks to win a noble and faithful lover.

"Laura replied simply that she did not know what the Duchess meant, for the only talent she possessed was fidelity to her lord and master. 'I should like to believe it,' retorted the Duchess, 'but you are a very clever woman to be able to teach a little dog to play pander and go-between.'

"Struck to the heart by what she thought was the treachery of her lover, the impetuous Châtelaine immediately left the palace and went to her own house and flung herself on her bed in bitter grief and misery and there died presently of a broken heart.

"Seeing her in her room alone, the little dog immediately set off to find the knight, and a few minutes later the knight entered and found his dear mistress dead upon the bed. Of his own fear, he guessed that the Duke had betrayed him, and, not being able to live without his sweet lady, he stabbed himself there and then with his own sword, and died kissing his mistress.

"As soon as the news of the double tragedy spread abroad, the Duke and Duchess hurried to the scene. There the Duke was told by the waiting-woman how his

wife had insulted the Châtelaine, and, suddenly understanding all her vileness, and how she had brought two faithful lovers to death out of base envy and jealousy, he snatched the sword from the body of the knight and thrust it into the throat of his wife. And so the wicked Duchess came to her reward."

"Is that the end?" asked Jenny, turning to him.

"It is the end of the story of the Châtelaine of Vergy."

"What happened to the Duke afterwards?"

"The tale goes," said Bancroft, "that, when he had time to think, the hot-headed Duke was filled with remorse at his own hasty action and mourned continually for the wife whom he had adored. Not being able to free himself from his love, he became a Templar and took the Cross and led a crusade to the Holy Land, in company with his enemies, the Counts of Nevers and Montfort. Later, too, he became the companion of arms of St. Louis at Aigues-Mortes. When quite an old man, he went on a pilgrimage, hoping at length to win forgetfulness of his love and to gain absolution of his mortal sin."

Jenny had listened to him in almost complete silence, and, when his voice died away, she seemed still lost in thought. Standing there, looking at her, he wondered how he could have wasted time over the old tragedy: they had their own story, and it was there with her to be lived.

He wanted to take his love in his arms and tell her how sweet it was just to be near her, to be able to look

at her as much as he liked, without any one to come between them. He couldn't help drinking in every detail of her face and figure: was there ever anyone with such exquisite, hidden charm? The better you knew her the more you found to praise; her skin in silky fineness and coloring was like a roseleaf; the lines of her slight, round figure, . . . but nothing counted in comparison with her passionate spirit and the symbol of it—the great, arresting eyes. . . .

Suddenly she rose, as if she had made up her mind, and turned to him. Her eyes had never seemed to him so mysterious.

"How much you've taught me!" she exclaimed, "and how unwilling I was at first to learn from you! You've made a new world for me and filled it with pictures and stories and new ideas. I'm glad we met." She spoke with the finality of a decision and her eyes took his bravely.

"It's nothing," he said almost mechanically, his eyes glowing; "I'm glad if I've done anything." He longed so intensely to touch her, to put his arms about her, that he wondered whether she could remain unconscious of his wish, and, so, lost in desire, he repeated without thinking: "Very glad if I've done anything. . . ."

"You've done everything," she cried; "turned a child's empty room into a gallery of painted wonders with new visions and new feelings, and I can do nothing in return. I never felt so poor and humble before. I can do nothing for you."

"Why do you say such things?" he cried, stretching out his hands to her; "you must know your being here is heaven to me," and now his eyes held hers imperiously and she gave her hands to him, and he drew her close and put her arms about his neck, and then took her lips with his, and they were both lost in the delight of it.

"And so you do love me?" she said a little later. "Let me look at you, sir, you wonder, you who talk my soul out of my body"; and she held his face with her hands, studying it for a moment, and then kissed him again on the mouth, giving herself to his embrace.

"You don't know what your kiss means to me," he said gravely; "your lips draw all the pain from my heart; the ache all changed to joy by your kindness."

"I'm so glad; so glad to be in love with you," said Jenny with shining eyes. "Shall I be in love always, I wonder?"

Suddenly as if the old fear had come to life in her, she asked:

"Have you been in love before?" and her eyes searched his.

"I didn't know what love meant till I met you," he replied, simply.

A moment later:

"You give royally without hesitation or reserve," he cried, "as I imagined you would; your courage pleases me intensely."

"How could I keep anything back?" she asked.

"Really, I'm ashamed to take so much and give you so little."

"You're giving more than you know," he said reasonably, in order to convince her. "If I've altered your ideas a little, you've changed everything for me; made straight the paths of my ambition. When talking to you of Sluter it became clear to me that I, too, must be an artist and writer.

"As for feelings," he went on, "we had better not talk of them: to touch you drives me wild; what magic is there in you?" he exclaimed in wonder. "You struck me as pretty at first, now you're lovely to me—exquisite; your figure pleased me, now it exasperates and delights me. I see all sorts of strange perfections in you I had never dreamed of before."

"You've got that attraction, too, for me," she said frankly; "your hands showed it to me first"—and she took his right hand in hers—"they are so expressive," she went on; "expressive of strength and gentleness. It's the contradictory things in you that please me so intimately."

"In fact, we're in love with each other," he laughed exultantly, "and must reckon like lovers, not usurers: in love *it's more blessed to give than to receive,* and that's the only contest we shall have."

And again their lips sought each other as if they could never have enough of this new joy. When they came to earth again he exclaimed, as if aghast:

"We've forgotten Lord Favershall! What will you say to him?"

"What's he to me?" Jenny answered, as if she hardly understood.

"He's engaged to you, isn't he?" questioned Bancroft. "Your father told me so and your mother confirmed it."

She shook her head. "He is not and never was," and, with a little shiver, as if awaking, she added: "How did you ever believe it?"

He put his hands on her waist. "I believed your father: you told me he was good and loved you. How could I suspect him?"

She shook her head, looking at him with the serious, intent eyes. "You oughtn't to have believed it."

"You imperious witch!" he cried, laughing. "I believed so much more. I thought you had asked your father out of pity for me to tell me you were engaged so that I might not fall too insanely in love with you. What do you think of that?"

But Jenny wouldn't treat it lightly. "You should not have believed it," she repeated sharply.

A little frightened, he began to use his wits. "We are all humble when we love, Jenny, and I was very humble with you, and still am, when I think of your beauty and all you might expect."

"I don't like you to be humble," she said with a quick change of mood, putting her hands on his shoulders while her deep eyes searched his:—

"You made me wonder whether you were entangled

in some way or other, perhaps married. How could I tell? Your doubt chilled us both."

"You must forgive me," he said, taking her again in his arms. "You *must* forgive me, for you doubted me without having any reason; you've just confessed it, so now forgive at once."

"There is nothing to forgive," she said like a child with another change of mood; "nothing. I'm sorry for the days we've lost, and I wanted to punish you a little for losing them. That was all."

"Why on earth did your father deceive me?" he exclaimed. "If it had been your mother, I should not have minded what she said."

"But it was my mother," she replied. "It was my mother who got my father to believe it and tell you."

"What will they say now?" he asked.

"Mother'll be mad, I guess," she replied simply; "but father'll be on our side. He loves me and would give me the moon if I wanted it. How good he is! But we won't let them know yet," she went on. "Mother is cunning, you know, and doesn't give up her plans easily. I believe I'm a tiny bit afraid of mother. She'll use any weapon: if being ill and sulky won't get her what she wants, she'll try hysterics and—anything. We'll have a great fight with mother, I'm sure."

"We'll be together," he said smiling.

"I know," she said, giving eyes and lips again; "but now let's get back to them; I don't want mother to know yet. I want a little secret joy first, and I want to

think out everything clearly," and after another long embrace Jenny drew away, pointing down the scarped valley while she brooded on him with shining, tender eyes.

As soon as they all met, the mother began to think that something had happened. She suspected it when she looked at Bancroft, but she felt sure when she saw Jenny and took in at a glance her heightened color and the radiance in her eyes. Rage came to her. Her next thought was:

"I'm glad I've persuaded Henry. He'll get us back to Paris without further delay, and then I'll soon find out how far things have gone!"

The first thing Mr. Foxwell said was: "I wonder if we could reach Paris to-night, Mr. Bancroft, or is it too far?"

"Unless there's imperative reason," replied Bancroft quietly, though with a shrinking at heart, "we should stay at Sens to-night. There's a lot of *pavé,*" he added; "we shouldn't get in till very late."

"To-morrow'll do," replied Mr. Foxwell; "only as the big town gets near, it draws, I find. I shan't be sorry to get into touch with things again." And so it was decided.

CHAPTER XVIII

BANCROFT was naturally eager to meet Jenny early in the morning, and, as she usually came down before her mother, he haunted the hall of the hotel at Sens before seven o'clock, but only got a nod from Mr. Foxwell on his way to the restaurant for breakfast. About eight he received a little note from Jenny:

"Mother suspicious; must quiet her. Father remarked you. Shall not be down till nine; don't wait about, my lover."

He went off at once, delighted, and when, at nine o'clock, he left the car and entered the hotel, the Foxwells were just coming downstairs. He bowed with quiet reserve and busied himself with his work. He felt, in some obscure way, that Jenny, too, was on her guard. She never even looked at him. As soon as they were seated side by side he had the explanation. Looking straight in front of her, she said:

"Don't turn and look at me. The danger signal's up. If we want even half an hour together we'll have to be extra careful."

Her tone thrilled him, and her words. She did want to get the half hour with him.

"I was so glad you went off at once this morning," she continued, her lips scarcely moving.

"There is no chance," he asked, in the same wooden-doll way, looking straight in front of him, "of our stopping at the Cathedral here and getting a word together?"

"I'm afraid not," she replied. "Mother would not leave us for a second. Our only hope is to drive a long way and put her suspicions to rest."

"Why on earth are you so frightened of your mother?" he revolted. "She will have to know soon."

"She has managed already to keep us apart for a good while," Jenny answered; "she'll do us more harm before long—I know her."

He shrugged his shoulders. "Will there be any chance of a talk before Paris?" he questioned. "I wanted to show you one view at Fontainebleau, looking over the town itself, and especially I wanted to tell you what your little letter meant to me."

"Let me think," she said; "when do we reach Fontainebleau?"

"About noon, for lunch."

After a pause she resumed: "Mother likes to rest after a meal; if you would take the car where she couldn't hear it start, I could come to you after lunch, I think for half an hour. Would that do?"

"Splendid, splendid!" he said.

"Keep your face straight," she cried. "You mustn't

look at me like that, sir, or you won't get your half hour."

He could not help smiling—the constraint united them. The secrecy, the complicity, seemed to intensify their passionate intimacy. It was as if the mother were pushing them into each other's arms.

"I feel like saying all sorts of things to you, you witch," he went on. "I could hardly sleep for thinking of you, and dreams of you shook me."

"There you are again turning toward me!" she exclaimed. "You'll make me go inside before I must!"

"Are you going inside?" he cried, with a sharp pang. To soothe the pain he put his left hand down on her lap.

"That's so bold it may escape detection," she said, "but it's worse than dangerous"; and she laughed a little delightedly under her breath.

"What am I to do when you hurt? I must soothe the pain. Why must you go inside?"

"To show that I don't care to be outside with you," she replied; "otherwise, how do you think we'd get our half hour at Fontainebleau? Mother is determined to reach Paris as soon as possible, for there she thinks she'll be able to keep us apart."

After a little pause she went on: "She used rather a high trump to-day, and mother doesn't waste much. She told me she knew my pride, and could trust me not to compromise myself with a *chauffeur;* and, when she felt that I was smiling, instead of getting angry, she added that, after all, it wasn't fair to Lord Favershall or

to my father. She tried to enlist my pride against you, you see. Had she tried it twenty-four hours sooner, the trick might have succeeded; to-day it was too late."

"But why does she hate us so?" he asked. "I thought you said she liked me?"

"Mother likes no one but herself, and I think she really dislikes me, has disliked me for more than two years."

"Tell me why!" he asked simply.

"It's a long story," she replied; "but if you'll keep your hands quiet, I'll tell it."

He withdrew his left hand obediently.

"That's better," Jenny exclaimed, "much safer. This is how it came about. We were still in New York. Mother had promised to take me to Europe two years before, but New York and Saratoga were pleasant to her, and she put off going. At length father interfered and said we must all go as soon as it got hot. Mother promptly fell ill, and went off to a little cottage in the Adirondacks, and we used to go down to her at week-ends. Father was very busy settling up his affairs and missed a week-end. Mother immediately wired him that she was very ill and he was to come at once. He was really engaged in important affairs, and told me it might cost him a great deal to go. I persuaded him to let me go down for him. There was nothing the matter with mother and I told him so. The day after my return he got a wire from mother telling him to come at once—important! Father was for starting then and there, al-

though it was ten o'clock at night. I persuaded him to wire to a doctor whom he knew in the neighborhood and send him across to report. The doctor reported that mother was all right. She has never forgiven me for it."

"How did she know it was you?" asked Bancroft.

"Oh, she guessed it," replied the girl; "guessed that father wouldn't have thought of sending Dr. Lambton. We are going to have trouble with mother yet, but this time I don't mean her to win. You must not do that," she added, drawing away from his vagrant hand. "You are steering badly; father will notice that and remark on it."

"How can I help wanting to touch you?" he said, "when your words set my heart jumping and pulses beating? The hope of winning you makes me drunk. Your mere presence intoxicates me."

"And to think," she exclaimed, "we might have had talks like these ever since the Valley of the Romanche, if you hadn't believed that nonsense!"

"I shall never forget that moment," he cried; "that was what your eyes meant, wasn't it?" he asked.

"Of course," she answered. "I should not have left them in yours a second if I hadn't meant them to tell you I cared for you.

"That's what eyes are for," she added. "Now I really think you ought to stop the car and I ought to go inside."

"Before you go," he exclaimed quickly, "give me some sweet thing to think of till we meet."

"What am I to tell you?" she said, looking away from him, as if in utter indifference, examining the landscape to the left, "that I am as crazy as you are, or worse? You must be blind not to see it. Don't you know what writing that one word 'lover' in the letter meant to me: it was like touching you with my fingers in the dark and conjuring you up before me—you and your kisses. Now stop the car," and she turned to him imperiously, putting up her hand, "please."

Obediently he drew up at the side of the road, and she got down, exclaiming, so that her mother might hear:

"No, no; I can get in by myself easily; it's a little cold this morning and I don't like the dust."

As he closed the door after her he pushed the back of the landaulette forward a little to shelter them. "I hope you won't mind my going quickly," he said. "It's still a long way to Fontainebleau, where you should lunch."

Mr. Foxwell nodded to him: "Go ahead!"

And Mrs. Foxwell, smiling happily, added: "Fontainebleau sounds so near home, doesn't it?"

He forced himself to smile back, and took up his driving again. The miles to Fontainebleau passed as in a dream, for all the while he could hear her say: "Lover," and, "like touching you with my fingers in the dark"—what magical words she found!

He never knew how they came to Fontainebleau; but as he lifted her from the car two hours later he said: "Fifty yards from us is the place. I have run

as close as I could. But first a kiss, dear, and then I will take you there," and he put his arms under hers and his hands behind her head and held her to him, lips on lips.

"We've only half an hour," she warned, "to see everything."

"Here is the view," he said, leading her out among the trees to the edge of the plateau.

A valley lay below them. Right and left the forest rolled away in wave after wave of green. In the middle distance a river, like a thread of silver, a bridge and a few cottages, with their red tiles glowing rose in the sunshine; over the river and the adjacent forest on both banks lay a mist of gossamer; further away beyond the rolling green wave of forest a broad upland like a skein of many-colored silks, the brown of tilth, the pale-green of barley, intermingling with the silver of ripening wheat and the gold of mown grass.

"It is like a picture by Constable," she said; but he exclaimed:

"Who wants to look at scenery when you are there? We have only thirty minutes," he said, taking her arm again; "only thirty!"

"Our last half hour before Paris," she responded at once, "where meetings will be more difficult."

The magic of her beauty was on him, and the appeal. "Come," he said, with grave eyes; "I know a place all mossed over and hidden in the bracken with trees as sentinels."

Hand in hand they went. He took her in his arms and kissed her, exclaiming in wonderment: "All beauty draws me to you: that landscape was the background and frame for your loveliness. I shall never forget the picture; you are the rose-heart of beauty to me."

"Don't kiss me for a moment, please," she cried; "I can only feel when you kiss me, and I want to think. We should first make all our arrangements—writing that note taught me—let us settle places for writing and meeting. Where can I write to you in Paris?"

Bancroft looked at her: "You frighten me. Hotel Meurice will always find me, and we can meet in the Tuileries gardens opposite, if you will. The simpler everything is, the easier and better."

"Easy or hard," she replied, "makes no difference."

"But how can I write you?" he asked. "Fear grows in me."

"I'm always down before mother in the morning," she answered. "Write so that I get it early, and, during the day, wire—telegrams are always brought straight to me"; and with a sigh of content she turned her face up to him, and again he took her lips.

A little while later she drew away from him, looking divinely pretty with her hot cheeks, tossed hair and glowing eyes.

"How wonderfully you kiss!" she cried, "better than anyone."

He laughed aloud in his joy.

"There's a confession for a young lady!" he exclaimed. "So you've had experience of kissing!"

Her eyebrows went up.

"Naturally, every girl has and has made comparisons. We're not fools. But who taught you, sir, to kiss so subtly?" and her eyes probed his. "I'm afraid you've more to answer for; no, I'm glad—that is, I don't care what happened before you met me."

"Nothing of any significance," he replied, taking her again in his arms.

A moment later she drew away again: "Always, always, you astonish me," she cried. "Now—but never mind," and before his look of questioning wonder, she explained:

"My head seems to have nothing to do with my body—it stands apart and judges. It cannot help watching the successive steps of your approach to intimacy. Each meeting I know there will be an advance," and she laughed like a mischievous child.

"I set limits in my mind and wonder will you know and reach them. Always you get further than I had thought, and yet so gradually, so inevitably, that I forget to watch at the time and only realize it all afterwards. How did you learn to know at every moment just what you may do before I know it myself?"

"Love, I suppose," he said, smiling; "and a fixed longing to please you and not myself. Even in the madness of passion to watch you, think of you, be one with you, and do what you desire."

"There it is again," she cried; "another of those contradictions in you which make me ache with admiration. Unselfishness never seemed to me a virtue before —it always goes with weakness, or with tepid desire. The so-called unselfish people give up easily because they don't want much. But you are dominant and imperious; you hate compromise and cotton-wool; you take and seize fiercely, and, just when I shrink and begin to doubt you, I notice that you are selfless, just thinking of me, studying my desire, using yourself to give me delight. No wonder I love you! What woman could help it that knew you? My love for you is passing beyond love," she added gravely.

"Hush, hush!" he cried. "Your lips make me drunk. Why will you talk—kiss me!"

"Not yet—I want to talk!" she cried; "want to tell you it is the artist in you that delights me, wins my very soul, the self-restraint, the strength held in reserve. You are the lover I dreamed of."

"I love your praise," he said. "I'm greedy for it, but I don't deserve it yet—later, perhaps. At any rate, I'll do my best to win it. But don't let us talk; the moments fleet and you'll have to go. Speech is a veil of the soul, but when our lips meet I learn you better; the veils vanish, your lips are more expressive than words, and tell me more than you imagine. I'll soon know when your doubts are only a seeking for assurance, and your imperiousness a form of jealousy. Oh, I shall get to know you, and then I shall win you utterly."

"I love you now," she said; "you must know it—but it's surely time! The half-hour's gone, isn't it? Don't let us be foolish. I'll give you more in Paris, but now let us hurry. Surely, you've had enough of me for one day.

"No day can be long enough," he replied simply. "You are the delight of life to me."

On the way to the town she broke out: "They talk about loving our opposite—that's only the A B C of love, and only for common souls. Like loves like. I don't believe able men love fools, do you?"

"They say Napoleon loved that wretched Josephine," he answered, "and Goethe his cook; but if so they were not great as lovers. Probably love to them meant little. Napoleon loved Josephine when he was only a youth, and took her for a great lady. Goethe loved his cook as a German loves a facile ordinary pleasure; he never could paint more than a Gretchen, never imagined a great woman, and all his work is limited by that."

Going down the hill in the car she said: "Take me into the town, drop me near the postoffice. We've been so long away that it will be better for you to go to the hotel and say I left word you were to pick me up at the postoffice. I can easily explain in the car that I was writing to Lord Favershall, and, as I shall have ten minutes, I will write him. I don't think he'll care much for my letter," she added, smiling.

"How is it you think of everything?" he asked. "I feel a schoolboy in comparison."

"I know the danger," she answered, simply.

When Bancroft got to the hotel he found that the Foxwells were ready, and Mrs. Foxwell's searching look put him on his guard. "If she can forget her smiles," he said to himself, "it's getting serious."

"I'm sorry to be late," he said, "but the engine had seized a little, and, as Miss Foxwell sent word to me that she wouldn't be ready for half an hour or so, I thought I had better get the car in order. We're to pick her up at the *Grande Poste,*" he added.

The explanation seemed satisfactory, for Mrs. Foxwell was all smiles and Mr. Foxwell took it as imperturbably as he seemed to take all the incidents of life. In five minutes they had reached the postoffice, and found Jenny waiting. Bancroft got down, but she went by him curtly and opened the carriage door herself and got in. He couldn't resist touching her as she passed him; he closed the door behind her, swung himself into his seat, and set out for Paris with a little fear at heart.

"If she loves me," he said to himself, "why is she afraid of her mother? Why not tell her boldly?" He determined at the first opportunity in Paris the next day to put the question to her. But he had a more cunning antagonist than he imagined, and he soon found he could not think out a plan of action beforehand and keep to it.

CHAPTER XIX

JENNY was justified in her fear of her mother. In spite of her baby mouth and violet eyes and appealing smiles, Mrs. Foxwell was very strong and very clever. She had the astonishingly effective power of selfishness; she was seldom torn two ways at once; her affections rarely interfered with her self-interest. She had been proud of her daughter, but, as soon as she found a critic in her instead of a worshiper, she began to stop caring for her, and now looked upon her merely as a pawn in the game. Perhaps she liked Mr. Foxwell as much as she could ever like anyone. He had given her everything she wanted, and had never seriously interfered with her. It had been her ambition for years to go to London and play society Queen there. She had not succeeded too well in New York. The truth was, she was hardly educated enough to win a great place in that society. There is an intellectual strain in the New York atmosphere, an intellectual smattering. To succeed there one must be in touch with the new currents of thought and feeling, or have a certain hereditary position. Now, Mrs. Foxwell had no hereditary position, and, for an American, was curiously ignorant. She had spent her time as a girl in flirting and dancing, and

after marriage in taking care of her face and figure and health. She was clever enough to realize very soon that she could never succeed in New York—clever enough to understand that her sheer prettiness and wealth gave her a better chance in London or Paris. Of the two, she would perhaps have preferred Paris, had it not been that it was impossible for her to master French. But as soon as she appeared in London she realized that England was indeed her home. No one there scrutinized American credentials very closely: good looks, pleasant manners, and money were all that was required, and these she had in abundance. In London she felt, with a sigh of content, no one in society cares anything for Nietzsche or Bergson, and impressionists or post-impressionists in art only call for a shrug of the shoulders and contemptuous dismissal. In fact, knowledge there is a dangerous thing, and fine taste something to hide carefully away.

Lord Favershall's courtship of Jenny was the one thing needed to make everything in London easy for Mrs. Foxwell. She knew, none better, the value of his name and position. He was the sheet-anchor which could secure the ship of her fortune in safe port. She was resolved that Jenny should marry him, and she had persuaded herself that, if Jenny saw her own self-interest clearly, she, too, would want to be Lady Favershall. It was all so clear to her; she was so certain of the inevitability of what she desired that she didn't mind indulging her daughter a little in a flirtation with Ban-

croft. She had flirted herself when she was young, and didn't think it harmed a girl, but when it came to marriage, that was altogether different. Marriage was definitive; it set a bound; it was the social limit—*thus far shalt thou go and no further.* Jenny's flirtation with Bancroft was going too far; it was compromising the splendid future.

As soon as they reached Paris, Mrs. Foxwell began to carry out her plans. She had already put it about discreetly that her daughter was to be married to Lord Favershall. The mere rumor had given her social position in Paris, and everyone was glad to see her and her lovely daughter. Mrs. Foxwell had merely to say that Lord Favershall had joined them on their motor trip and had spent several days with them at Dijon for everyone in the Faubourg to be exceedingly nice to her, and still nicer to Jenny. The atmosphere of good society Mrs. Foxwell knew would help her with Jenny—and it did. But, first of all, she felt she must have a talk with her and prevent any clandestine meetings with Bancroft. Jenny, she argued, was not only self-willed, but sensuous, imaginative. "I must get her head on my side," Mrs. Foxwell said to herself with a mother's cunning.

She was much too clever to ask her daughter how matters stood between her and Bancroft. It was better to ignore the relation, or take it for granted that there was nothing between them. She fully realized the significance of the saying, *let sleeping dogs lie.*

The very first day in Paris Mrs. Foxwell took Jenny

with her to lunch in the Faubourg, and they returned a little excited by the fact that they had been made the chief people at the lunch.

"The lunch was pleasant, daughter, wasn't it?"" began Mrs. Foxwell.

"Rather dull," said Jenny; "but they were all very kind."

"Very kind," replied Mrs. Foxwell, "because of Lord Favershall. I know you sent him away from Dijon, and I didn't interfere with you. I wanted you to have time to think for yourself, because you have a good head of your own."

In spite of herself Jenny began to get interested. Her mother, she knew, didn't waste compliments on womenfolk.

"For some reason or other Lord Favershall hasn't made you fall in love with him, perhaps because he has always been in love with you. But he's an ideal husband for you, Jenny—simply ideal!"

It was Jenny's smile that called forth the repetition and quickened Mrs. Foxwell to the combat. "Have you ever thought, daughter, about what I told you of your chief quality?"

"No," said Jenny cheekily; "I think it's devotion; but you say it's vanity."

"No, indeed, I do not," retorted her mother seriously; "I often wish you were much vainer than you are; your chief quality is pride. Whoever hurts your pride, Jenny, will make an enemy of you. Anyone who keeps your

pride on his side will sooner or later win you—sooner or later get you to like him. You may fall in love with a strong, masterful man—that's the pitfall for all of us women. In our hearts we all love strength, and are apt to go on our knees to it. But you could never play second fiddle to anyone and be happy, Jenny—not even to the man you loved. If you will think of yourself, you will know I'm right about that. The moment the glamour of passion fades, and it must and does fade—every fire must burn itself out—you get down to the root facts of human nature; and if you've made a mistake in what you want, you come to grief in life."

Her mother was talking, Jenny noticed, like her father —reasonably.

"Lord Favershall is an ideal husband for you for many reasons: first of all he's in love with you much more than you are with him—that's a great point. Then, he's weaker than you are and has less brains than you have, so he'll look up to you all the time while giving you affection and great social authority. Married to some second-rate person, your inferior position would drive you crazy mad in a week. You'd hate the man who had brought you down to it, and yourself for getting into such a contemptible position. No, no, Jenny! all doors must be opened to you, and you must go about like a queen, or you'll be miserable. Marriage, you see, is not for a year or two, but for all your life; and you must consider what your real wants are."

Jenny shrugged her shoulders: "I dare say, mother,"

she said, "you believe what you say, but I wish I could think it as simple as you do. I'm not all pride, you know. . . ."

"All the same that's your chief quality. Give yourself time, daughter—take time. Your father will tell you the same if you ask him, I'm sure. After you have been a month in London, you will tell me I'm right. Our house in Carlton House Terrace won't be ready for a week or two, or I would go over at once. But meanwhile, be a little prudent. Enjoy yourself and amuse yourself as much as you like, that doesn't do any harm—but don't commit yourself—take time."

And she did her best to make Paris pleasant to the girl. She took her out to the Opera, or to a theater almost every night. She gave dinners which she got Jenny to plan and arrange, and she visited and took tea here, there and everywhere. She kept the girl busy and amused. And she quietly dispensed with Bancroft by engaging an electric brougham and victoria—she hated the noise and the smell of the petrol car, she said, and she took good care that one or the other was always at the door for herself and daughter. She got Mr. Foxwell to tell Bancroft each morning that he could be free for the day, and she hoped, though she didn't reckon upon it, that this freedom would gradually lead him into neglecting some duty, or make him tired of waiting about. Meantime, she took care that Jenny's waking hours should be as pleasantly full as possible.

The only fault in Mrs. Foxwell's plan was that with

her uncommon directness and energy she made it too perfect and succeeded too completely. She barred Jenny away from Bancroft, took up all her time in the first days so that the girl could only snatch a hasty moment either before dinner or late at night before going to bed to write to her lover. Each morning she got a long letter from him, and before her mother's *régime* had lasted three whole days, Jenny was determined to meet Bancroft at any cost. Since Fontainebleau her love for him had become a passion, and passions are not to be killed by enforced separation. Bancroft's letters helped him. He didn't beg her to meet him or reproach her for not having met him. He interested her in his life by telling her in his letters of meeting artists and men of talent. He was always putting the intellectual, strenuous life before her, and he found a great ally in Jenny's intelligence and curiosity.

She had determined to meet him on the second morning, but her father had helped her mother unconsciously, and she had to put the meeting off. But the third morning she had written to Bancroft that she would be in the Tuileries at half past eight, and they met in almost perfect solitude, and walked through the gardens down to the Seine. She was taken aback by the effect his presence had on her; her breath caught, and her whole body glowed.

He seemed more desirable to her than ever. "There is a dignity about him—something magnetic," she said to herself; "a hint of Mercury, in his lithe, alert figure."

"I was beginning to be angry with you," he cried, "but the anger vanished, like dew under a hot sun, as soon as I saw you."

The need Jenny felt to defend and excuse herself was lifted by his kindness. "I wanted to see you yesterday," she responded, "but father stopped it by arranging for a ride in the Bois at ten o'clock, and I had either to tell him the truth, in front of mother, or to put you off. I had to put you off, dear, but now I have made up my mind to tell him. I want to get father on our side first. If mother got him, it would be too awful, for mother has made up her mind that I am to be Lady Favershall. She says that's the only way to gratify my pride, and my pride is my chief quality. Do you think so?" she said, searching his face with her eyes.

"I think you very proud, yes," he said; "but you have brains and heart—that is, your pride may be a noble pride. I think I know how Jenny will choose," he said, and he put his arm around her and drew her to him. She couldn't resist, or even look round to see if she would be noticed. His arm about her, the contact of his body, simply robbed her of all strength. She couldn't resist the overpowering sensation; it seemed as if happiness had caught her breath, and, with his lips on hers, she abandoned herself.

"I can't resist you," she said, a minute later, her eyes swooning into his. "I can't resist you, my beloved."

At once he put her away. "Honey-flower," he cried,

"I don't want you under compulsion, that would rob even your kisses of their charm!"

"No, no," she cried hurriedly. "I meant it just as a fact: you are overpowering to me. You excite me and intoxicate me and overwhelm me. I lose my own individuality with you, and when I'm away from you that makes me revolt against you. I catch hints of your masterful nature, and that strengthens my selfish resistance. Don't you understand? Often I'm absolutely frightened of you, frightened that you will absorb me, that I shall lose my whole personality. It's a delight at the moment," she cried, "but later I resent it. I want to be myself."

"Your resistance is right, Jenny," he said; "quite right. Only let us distinguish," and he took her arm as they walked on. "I always want you to be excited by me; I always want my touch to thrill you as yours thrills me—that's all right, isn't it? The physical attraction ought to be as strong as possible. But the reason why you feel that you are losing your mental individuality is simply that while we are alike, I am a little older than you. I show you the next rung on the ladder—you grow through me. But as soon as you are beside me, and that won't take you long, your individuality will come back to you at once, stronger, richer, larger than ever. Don't be afraid: your individuality is indestructible. You must give yourself a little time, that is all."

"That's what mother says," she exclaimed. "I must

take time, and my real nature will be against you, she asserts."

"Let us abide the test," he said simply. "Do you know what I'm afraid of?" She turned to him inquiringly, and he went on:

"What I call the spoilt child in you. You are very imperious and resolute, too apt to take sudden resolutions, and not considerate always. But you ought to be a spoilt child," he went on, smiling, "I don't see how anyone could help spoiling such an adorable sweetheart. Now I am going to kiss you again, because we have talked enough."

"No, no!" she exclaimed. "Not here and now. I'm afraid to—afraid of myself, and of you. Perfect love casteth out fear, it is said. It seems to me love intensifies fear."

"Surely," he replied, "the more we love the more we dread. We fear, not only for our love, but also for the person we love—it has a twofold root."

"Your power over me," she went on, irrelevantly, "is too great; it frightens me. I lose all control. When you put your fingers on my neck as you did then, I can't understand why it should thrill me so. I'm afraid of your caresses, though I long for them. They rob me of all sense. My head fights against the domination of my body and heart."

The truth was Jenny was astonished to find that Bancroft's caresses were sweeter to her in the Tuileries Gardens than they had been even at Fontainebleau. They

excited her more—gave her greater pleasure. She felt as if she were being carried away on a river that grew broader and deeper all the time, and the current more resistless.

Conventional people all agree with Mrs. Foxwell: they all believe that passion must consume itself and waste away. But that is not true, or only true with many qualifications. Even ordinary people, by eating too much, can quickly change desire into loathing, whereas, if they eat in moderation, food strengthens the appetite. Real lovers find another measure; passion to them grows both with absence, and with what it feeds on. The fact that Jenny hadn't seen Bancroft for three days increased her desire for him; the necessity of leaving him soon, keyed up her passion, and the kisses he had given her only intensified her longing. She wanted him terribly. Looked at from one side love is the most egoistic of the passions: its needs and demands are the most imperious. But as the passion asks more, so it wants to give more, and this overwhelming desire of Jenny's made her long to give.

"What can I do to make him happy?" she thought. "What can I give to show how I love him—how grateful I am to him for everything?"

"I've made up my mind," she said quietly, "to tell father I love you. I am going to ask him to give us a day together. I can't hope to get it without his help, therefore I'm going to ask him to take us somewhere.

I promise you I'll tell father of our love before the end of this week."

"That's good," he glowed, "but don't think I can't wait. I can be patient now," he added, "that you have consecrated these gardens for me. I shall walk here every day, and conjure you up before me, and it will be easy to wait;" he meant it all at the moment.

The novel sweetness of her power over him was irresistible to Jenny; she could not go till she had given him more, made the next appointment certain.

"Next Saturday," she said, "at latest, if not before, we'll meet. The moment I get in I'll speak to father, or just after lunch—as soon as I can get him away from mother."

And with that promise they parted.

The days for Bancroft went past slowly. Each morning when he received from Mr. Foxwell the message that he was not wanted, he felt a little annoyed, humiliated. "I'm being treated as a chauffeur," he said to himself, though conscious the while that it was not true. He spent nearly every morning walking in the Tuileries Gardens watching the hotel, hoping for a message, hoping even against hope that she would come.

One morning he was astonished at seeing Mademoiselle Berthe coming towards him. At once he associated her with Jenny. Could she have a message for him? He hastened to meet her, and as soon as she saw him she flushed with excitement, and bowed delightedly.

"Oh, Monsieur Bancroft, I've often thought of you,"

she said, "and of our talk in the automobile. Are the Foxwells in Paris? But I need not ask that," she added significantly.

"Yes, they are here," said Bancroft, ignoring the suggestion. "They are staying at Meurice's. But where are you going, Miss Berthe?"

"I'm trying to find a place," she said plaintively, shrugging her shoulders, "going here and there asking. Mademoiselle did me great harm," she went on; "she told me I should always be with her if I suited her, and then she discharged me after the season in Paris had begun. Had I known she was going to send me away, I'd have gone a month before, and got any number of places; but as it is I'm afraid I shan't be able to get one before September or October, when the fashionable people come back to Paris. Ah, employers are selfish beasts, are they not?"

"I dare say they seem so," he said; "but surely if you told Miss Foxwell all that, she would have either kept you on or made it up to you in some way. I'm sure she doesn't know."

"You believe that?" she asked sceptically.

"Surely I do," he answered, "she's very kind." The need to praise her was on him.

"I dare say she is to you," retorted Miss Berthe viciously; "that's why she discharged me."

"What do you mean?" asked Bancroft.

"She's mad after you," said Berthe, her envy and disappointment showing in a rage of denigration. "Any-

one could see it. She told me when she came back the first day from riding with you that you were a splendid driver. But when I praised you she got furious. She was enraged that you talked with me about Napoleon—that's why she sent me away, the cat: because she thought you liked me."

"No, no," said Bancroft, laughing at what seemed to him the height of absurdity. "You mustn't think that!"

"You love her," said Berthe, looking up at him through narrowing eyes; "have you told her? Tell her you want her—she'll say 'yes'; a woman knows another woman."

"You're altogether mistaken," Bancroft replied coldly, "and to prove it I'll ask Miss Foxwell to take you back or make it up to you for being discharged at such a bad time."

Miss Berthe, he said to himself, had always a poor opinion of her employers, probably because she judged them by herself; but he felt he must justify Jenny even to her, at any cost.

"I'm very much obliged to you," said Berthe, smiling on him, "but it'll do no good," and she shrugged her shoulders.

"Oh, yes, it will," he said obstinately; "but where am I to let you know?"

Miss Berthe smiled again delightedly. "I'm living with my sister in the Rue Lepic, No. 30, but I pass through these Gardens every day at this time."

"Then I'll see you here to-morrow or the next day," he said. "I'll write to Miss Foxwell to-day."

And he did write, saying that he wanted to see her for a moment or two. He had someone he wanted to talk to her about. Jenny's answer was not favorable.

"I said Saturday," she replied, "and will keep it; but who is it you want to see me about? I want to see you about no one—I want to see you, my lover!"

Next day Bancroft met Berthe again at almost the same place. He told her casually he had written and had received a letter, but should not see Miss Foxwell for a few days.

"I didn't mention your name," he continued, "because I wanted to explain your position to her at some length. But I'm going to write again to her, and probably, if you will come to the Hotel Meurice next Monday about eleven, I'll tell you the result; I shall have seen Miss Foxwell by then."

Berthe thanked him very enthusiastically, but didn't know where the Hotel Meurice was.

"It's there," he said, accompanying her to the railings and pointing to the hotel opposite; "there, across the road," and he turned and walked with her a few steps.

In the course of talk he learned that she was very poor, and, pitying her condition, he gave her five hundred francs.

That little act of kindness was destined to cost him dearly. By some evil chance Mrs. Foxwell was at her window on the third floor of the hotel, and saw Bancroft meet Berthe. It astonished her a little, but interested her much more. She watched them walking together,

and saw him point to the hotel. They were evidently plotting something. Then she saw him give Berthe money and saw them part familiarly. It was a *liaison* plainly. How strange that she should have discovered it—and how fortunate! Mrs. Foxwell smiled: Fate had given her a trump card, she felt—a high trump. And she was a good judge.

CHAPTER XX

IN the evening Bancroft got a little note:

"I have told father I must have a day off to spend with him in the car. I think he knows, or divines, our secret. He's taking us to Versailles to-morrow. I shall then tell him that I love you. Be at the door at eleven o'clock, and we shall have the whole day together. It seems such a treasure to look forward to: six or seven hours together, and looking back it will all perhaps shrink to two or three words of yours and a new sensation, a new emotion. I never meet you now without getting something unexpected, wonderful, you master-lover."

Bancroft smiled as he read the note. "What a dear she is!" he thought. "She told me she had always written little curt letters, and now she tries to make every note memorable to me. She has the genius of love in her," he said to himself. "It will be all right: Mr. Foxwell will persuade Mrs. Foxwell."

At eleven o'clock next morning he was waiting in front of the Meurice. The clock had scarcely struck when Mr. Foxwell, with his accustomed punctuality,

came out accompanied by Jenny. To Bancroft's surprise, Jenny came straight to him and held out her hand. The deep, intent eyes were more serious than ever. He wanted to kiss her hand, but contented himself with bowing over it, meeting her look with equal seriousness. She got into the carriage, and Mr. Foxwell said: "To Versailles."

In a minute or two, as it seemed to Bancroft, he was running up the Champs Elysées, the car singing under his feet as he had never heard it sing before. The chestnut trees had hung out ivory lamps against the green. His excitement seemed to increase as he passed round the great Arch of the Star and down the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne. He could only think with delight of what was coming.

Jenny's resolve to tell her father was a great step in advance. It was everything, he said to himself, with the high spirits of youth, and he rammed the accelerator home, and swung over the long hill and down into the little moribund provincial town faster than he had any idea of. As he opened the door to let them out at the hotel, Mr. Foxwell looked at him quizzically.

"You haven't lost much time, Mr. Bancroft," he said, with a little humorous smile; "but perhaps it's as well, for I hope that you'll lunch with us, and you may want a few minutes to get ready."

Bancroft couldn't keep the light out of his eyes. His blood was dancing in his veins. He never knew after-

wards where he put the car, or how; though he garaged it all right.

An hour later they were all seated at the table together, looking out over the garden. With quiet forethought, Mr. Foxwell had put the young pair opposite each other, and himself took the seat between them at the head of the small oblong table. When the meal was over and the coffee was brought, it was he who began the serious talk.

"Jenny tells me," he said, "Mr. Bancroft, that she loves you and that you love her. I told her to wait and make quite sure. Not that I have anything against you. On the contrary, you have been the best chauffeur and best guide that one could find, and a man who can get down and do small things well is apt to do the big things well, too. I always said that if I had to wait at table I'd have done it better than any other man, or tried to. But I advised Jenny to go slow and make sure, because marriage is important for all women—the biggest thing in their lives—and it's going to be more important to this girl of mine than to most women, because she stakes all she's got! . . .

"Now she seems to have made up her mind that she loves you, and she told me that she has been taken up this week in Paris nearly every minute, and has scarcely been able to see you, and so I brought her down here. I've got to look at some land and a château that they want me to buy that's said to be a great bargain, though I'm not much taken with this dead-and-alive place. I

just used the occasion to come and look at it—it seems only polite—and while I'm looking at it you two will go off and I dare say find a good deal to talk about. I don't need to say more to you, Mr. Bancroft," he concluded, "than that I think Jenny'll have a fair chance of happiness with you. I'm willing to trust her instinct in the matter. I like you," he said cordially, "though I don't like the chauffeur business, but I guess you'll change all that," he added, and he stretched out his hand. Bancroft took his hand, and, as if it had been an afterthought, Mr. Foxwell went on: "I've told Jenny Mrs. Foxwell must be told. She should have been told before, but she must be told to-morrow. I leave you both to decide now how it shall be done—see?"

For some reason or other best known to lovers, the pair, as soon as they were free, wandered towards the Palace at Versailles.

"Your father was very good to me," said Bancroft, "astonishingly human and kind!"

"Yes," Jenny replied. "As soon as I told him that you had swept me off my feet and had made a new heaven and a new earth for me, he gave us the afternoon together; but he insists on mother being told, and I'm afraid."

"What is there to be afraid of?" asked Bancroft in amazement. "After all, the issue is in our hands."

"I know," said the girl; "I know all that. But mother is mother—you don't know her yet. I do, and her influence on father is very strong. It's got to be done

now, but we're going to have trouble. You can bet on that."

While Bancroft was trying to reassure her, they came out on the famous terrace with its great basins of water, and everywhere figures of women in bronze and marble.

"I don't like it," said Jenny, with a little shiver, "do you? It's all so cold and formal and dead."

"Yet it's just the influence of Versailles on you I so much dread," cried Bancroft. "This is the incarnation of aristocracy!

"Look at their idea of art!" he went on. "Nothing but conventional female figures, mawkishly idealized to provoke passion! Look how they despise nature and cut trees into shapes! It is all show-off and artificial, yet you once said you liked the society racket, and I've had to realize again and again this last week that you do, and it frightens me."

"That's my pitfall," she admitted wistfully: "I love to meet new people. I am curious about men—excited by them, interested in them. I want to know what they think of me—why shouldn't I say it? I want them to like me and admire me and put me above other women. But is there any harm in that?"

"None," he interjected, "none, but let us go on into the Park," he added, "where we can talk alone and freely."

A little later they found a seat in a green solitude. "Now," he said, and Jenny took up the challenge at once.

"You don't realize perhaps," she began, using the attack in self-defence, "that there's no other ambition for a girl than just to shine in this society show," and, seeing his eyebrows go up, she added: "What else is there? What else can one do?"

"Anything, everything!" he replied. "The world is open to you, and the possibilities in it are only limited by your powers and your desires, and by nothing else. Surely you see that!"

"I'm afraid I don't," she replied. "Show me, won't you, just what you mean?"

"I mean," he said, "that the great lover makes a lyric of life, and the hero makes an epic of it, while the greedy man turns it into a trough, and the avaricious into a spider's web. You can be a society leader and get your head above the other heads, if that's your desire, but the ambition seems to me to degrade you."

"But what else can I do?" she cried. "Put a worthier ambition before me and see whether I reject it before you despise me."

"Oh, forgive me!" he cried. "I could never even blame you. What I want you to realize is that you can do almost anything you like. In my opinion you are extraordinarily gifted—a magnetic personality. Count up your advantages: you have brains and resolution in a remarkable degree, health, youth, beauty, energy. If I were you I'd resolve to be one of the famous women of the world—be someone, do something that would never be forgotten."

"But what, what, what?" she cried.

"That's for you to choose and decide," he said. "Jeanne d'Arc chose one thing, Heloise another, Charlotte Corday another—but all were great women and did great things."

She shook her head doubtfully. "But if one were as heroic as Jeanne d'Arc, what could one do to-day? America does not need a deliverer; is not under the foot of a conqueror."

"Really?" he replied, "I'm not sure. It is, I have heard, under the feet of great bankers and Trusts, and perhaps needs a deliverer as much as ever France did. And your own sex," he went on, "women, are enslaved economically, chained to subservience. Why not resolve to free them?"

The serious eyes held him. "Go on, you interest me intensely. Are you in favor of woman's suffrage?"

"More than that," he replied, "far more. Women must be honored—one must think nobly of their capacity and virtue. Their influence in the home is far better than that of men, why should not their influence in the State be better? I believe it will be, and is. Wars would soon cease if women had a say in government. For a thousand reasons I desire their enfranchisement. I used to think we needed a Christ on every street corner in order to humanize mankind; now, I hope it may be done by a woman in every house. But you need not take this freeing of women as your mission unless it commends itself to you, to your heart and soul."

"But it does, it does naturally," she cried, "only tell me how they can be freed, the steps, I mean. I'm very ignorant."

"Thirty years ago," he began, "women were not allowed to practice as doctors. They are allowed to now, but still there are not nearly enough women doctors. You could found scholarships at Yale or Harvard or Columbia, or at all three, to make the career easier for them. Women are not allowed to practice law. You could support and train half a dozen clever girls till they broke down the barriers and got admitted on equal terms with men. You could found, too, a new profession, make journalism a liberal calling, endow chairs for it in this or that university, and see that women had as fair a chance as men. In twenty years, with your brains and wealth and genius, you might have improved the status of women out of all recognition. The field is immense: there are the poorer, weaker sisters in mill and factory who do men's work, and who have to be content with half men's wage. Get among them and organize them in Trades Unions, and force up the scale of their wages You can deliver your sex from a worse bondage than the French groaned under, and make a nobler name for yourself than Jeanne d'Arc."

"I should fail," she said. "I have not the genius and power you ascribe to me, or else I'd try quick enough."

"That's just what Jeanne d'Arc said for years," he replied. "When her 'voices' urged her to take up arms and free France, she answered that she was only a weak,

unlettered peasant girl, incapable of such great deeds."

"Good God!" she cried. "How you change everything, make my heart burn within me! Even as a child I wanted to be someone great and do something noble, and now when the hope even had almost died out of me, you come and show me the way to my heart's desire. How much I owe you—every day more and more!"

"Oh, my dear, dear!" he cried. "I'm doing you an ill-service. You owe me nothing—I'm pointing to the Cross and asking you to take it up. The crown will be of thorns."

"I'm not afraid," she said simply. "If I thought I were worthy I'd not hesitate long. Take me, teach me, show me. If I am able to do anything, I'm willing." Her eyes were full of unshed tears. "I'd give up everything for a great cause—everything but your love."

"That you don't need to give up," he replied; "we can find things to do, both of us, and we shall be able to help each other. I only wanted to show you that the 'Climber's' ambition was utterly unworthy of you. Our way must be up, and not down. If our love even is to win endurance and splendor, we must help each other to a larger, nobler life. You and I must grow and give, that's the only salvation for us."

"I love you more now," she said, "and better than even when you kiss me."

"But I want to kiss you, too," he broke in, smiling. "It is our kisses that will enable us to hold out. It has

always been a dream of mine to meet someone whom I could love with every fiber in me. Why should one starve any faculty?"

"How I blame myself for this last week!" she cried, "but now I'll turn my back on it all resolutely, I promise you. Before, I loved you for your qualities—I still love them, but now I love you for yourself, and your qualities might be defects, I should still love you, I think. You have become a god to me, yet you are like me. You show me the heights of life—'the steeps of God-like hardship'!—and the way up. You encourage me.

"Away back there in the Romanche you won my heart; at Fontainebleau my body, and now here, in Versailles, my soul. Oh, I am an instrument for your hands to play on—draw what melody you can from me. I am proud and glad my body pleases you; but so much more joyful that you care for the heart in me and the spirit. You great love!"

"Then we've made up our minds," he went on, "to get all the light we can, and then give whatever is in us to the service of man. There is no reason why two of us should not do more than one has ever done yet in history—that would be a good example if you like, and a moral," and he laughed with glowing eyes.

"If I could only be of real help to you!" she cried, "but the ideas are yours, the enthusiasm yours, the faith yours—I am nothing, can do nothing. You make me feel so humble. I wonder why you love me!"

They talked for hours, but this was the heart of what

they said. As the shadows began to lengthen, Bancroft got up.

"Come, let us go into the Park," he said, "to the lake-side, and I'll try to tell you how wonderful you are. You talk of the contradictions in me pleasing you, but think of the contradictions in you and the charm of them. Such arresting, soulful woman's eyes, then the clinging child's mouth, and the lithe, firm, girl's figure: three ages in you and thirty personalities. You are very enthusiastic and generous, and yet shrewd and observant. The fires of passionate temperament with the imperious intellect—the rarest combination of qualities. You are like a June morning—surface-cool and sweet with the latent promise of heat."

"I love you to praise me," she said, "but how beautiful!" and she pointed to the little lake that lay before them.

It was a silent, luminous evening, and the colors fading in the sky were in harmony with the colors of the shadowed water—dim, yet with a spiritual strange transparency. The trees fringing the dark shore mirrored themselves in the still water, so that Bancroft could scarcely tell shape from shadow. It seemed to him an artistic symbol of this incomprehensible world in which realities are dreams and dreams realities—this world in itself so mysterious, with the surprise everywhere of beauty in spite of the simplicity of things, and the miracle everywhere of happiness in spite of the eternal sameness of things as they are.

"All beauty leads me to you," he said, taking her hand in his gently; "seems in some subtle way connected with you."

"And you give meaning to life," she said, "by filling it with love and hope. My heart sings in me when you praise me as my body vibrates and thrills for hours after we're parted. You know all the ways of love, the heights of it and the intimacies, you love, you! But now we must be going. We must not keep father waiting, must we?"

CHAPTER XXI

AT length Jenny had got into the proper frame of mind to meet her mother. She had been carried away by Bancroft's enthusiasm. She felt as if lifted above common desires and common ambitions, and the whole proud, strong nature of her glowed with the idea of making all her life great and memorable. She had always wanted to be someone, and now with ecstatic elation she felt that her girlish dreams were about to be fulfilled. To go to her mother and tell her that she just loved Bancroft had seemed weak to her. She felt her mother's sneer beforehand; she could not avoid the imputation. It was all on a low, common level. But now she could go to her serenely, uplifted by a consciousness of noble purpose and high, unselfish aims. She could say, "You love that social life; I don't care for it. I don't want to alter you: please don't try to alter me." She heard herself saying the words, and thrilled with the dignity of the rôle. She couldn't resist showing her father even a little of her new feeling.

"Had a good time, daughter?" he asked, when they were in the carriage together: he was smiling, for he knew the answer, or thought he did.

"That's right, father," said Jenny seriously. "The

expression is right, I mean," she went on. "I have had a *good* time: he makes me a better woman."

Her father smiled again. "Jenny's got it pretty bad," he said to himself. But his remark to her was, "That's right, Jenny; I guess that's all right."

"I'm going to see mother to-morrow morning," she went on. "You were quite right about that, father; she ought to be told."

Mr. Foxwell smiled grimly. His hidden thought was: "The girl will have a peck of trouble, but I guess she'll win out." All he said was: "That's the best way, Jenny, I'm sure. Never run away from a difficulty, my girl, but always towards it. That's just the first lesson in life, and about the most important."

Jenny didn't want to betray herself further to her father; he was cold, she felt, not sympathetic enough for her overwrought mood; so she wrapped herself in silence, and just relived the moments passed with Bancroft.

All through dinner and the opera she kept the high mood, and when she got home she felt so happy that she couldn't help writing it to Bancroft:

"Just a word: your enthusiasms lift me, and your courage, and, above all, your pursuit of the big things. I am going to try to live on the same level. To-morrow morning I shall see mother. Good night."

She wouldn't even put in a word of endearment. . . .

It was in the same spirit that she went to see her mother about eleven o'clock next day.

"I want to talk with you, mother," she said, "because you ought to know what I have made up my mind to do. I want you to be kind about it," she said gravely. "I am going to marry Mr. Bancroft quite soon. He is everything I need, and I shall not change except to think more and more of him," she added in a little outburst.

"Oh, my poor child!" said Mrs. Foxwell, putting her arms round her and drawing her to her; "oh, my poor dear!"

"What is it, mother?" asked Jenny coldly, disentangling herself. "I don't feel like a poor child."

"How am I to tell her?" cried her mother, dramatically holding up her hands.

"Tell what, mother?" asked Jenny sharply, her anger rising as her heart sank in fear.

"How can I tell you?" replied her mother. "My dear, you are deceived in that man."

Jenny laughed.

"You can be really comic, mother," she said, "when you play tragedy queen."

Her mother looked at her, still keeping the drooping look of pity in her eyes.

"Yesterday," she began quietly, "I was standing at that window; come and see," she broke off. "You can see everything in the Gardens plainly, can't you?"

"Of course," said Jenny, "quite plainly."

"Well, there right under my window I saw your Mr. Bancroft yesterday meet your cast-off maid, Berthe."

Jenny looked at her.

"Berthe!"

"Yes, Berthe," replied her mother, "and it wasn't the first time they have met by many."

"How do you know that?" Jenny asked sharply.

"I have eyes in my head," said her mother, "and I saw them meet and I saw them part. They went down there among the trees, and I saw him give her money—bank-notes. I saw them quite distinctly."

Jenny stared at her.

"He gave Berthe money?"

What could it mean? She knew her mother well enough to know that it was probably true. She would never tell her a lie that must be found out immediately. A revulsion seemed to take place in her, her very inside seemed to turn and grow cold as the thought came to her: in Monte Carlo Bancroft had been very attentive to Berthe, had talked to her with great interest. Had he met her again by chance?

No, no; it wasn't a chance meeting—her mother said so. The memory came to her that he had said that she, Jenny, had consecrated the Tuileries Gardens for him. A rage of anger possessed her. How dare he! Just where he had kissed her the morning before, giving money to that ugly, stupid, common maid, with a dingy skin that never looked clean. Was he like that? All that she had read and heard of men came back to her. Men were

like that. How despicable! She would see him, find out if it were true, and if it were, she would never see him again—never. To talk to her about devoting their whole lives to high purposes, and to be carrying on an intrigue with the maid! All her beliefs and hopes fell in ruins about her feet.

Mrs. Foxwell came to her, frightened at her look, and put out her hand. But Jenny drew away.

"I shall find out the truth," she said. "I don't believe you," she added, striking ruthlessly.

The mother simply lifted her eyebrows and put on what one of her admirers used to call her "angelic expression."

"I wish you didn't have to believe me," she replied.

Jenny went to her own room in a whirl of conflicting feelings and reasonings. The surface of her nature was all brought into a tumult—the tide had suddenly met a contrary tide, and there was a mad tumult, so to speak, of lashing, broken waters. She couldn't disentangle her thoughts. She conjured up Bancroft, and it was all incredible to her; she thought of Berthe and her mother and everything was possible. She couldn't make up her mind for a moment which to believe. She was tossed about like a plaything, but deep down in her was one ache, a spasm of pain, an agony of fear against which her pride rose in hot revolt.

She sat down and wrote to him:

"I want to see you at once. Come, no matter what you are doing."

But when she had put it in an envelope and addressed it, she tore it up. She must come to some decision, she must wait and think, she must know more before she met him. Oh, the choking pain! Her very heart seemed to have turned to water in her.

Suddenly they came to her and told her that her father and mother were waiting lunch for her. She couldn't think of eating; she couldn't see them.

"Tell my father I'm lying down with a headache, and want to be left alone."

And she was left alone for the whole day. All day her passion fought with her pride; her resolve to trust her lover wrestling with her doubt, but slowly, surely, the pride conquered. If she had followed her first impulse and sent the letter to Bancroft, and had met him, the result might have been altogether different. But, as the hours passed, the insult of the thing burned into her more and more deeply, seemed to sear the very soul in her.

"If he can care for Berthe," she said to herself, "even wish to see her and talk to her where I kissed him, I want nothing more to do with him."

Suddenly she recalled his letter.

"He wanted to see me, to talk to me about someone. Of course that's it. Perhaps he wanted to tell me something about Berthe that I ought to know."

Then the ghastly certainty came to her: that letter was of two days before; he had seen Berthe then, and

had written and met her again the next morning. Her mother was right.

At once she gave free rein to her pride and anger. She did it the more readily because the anger and the consequent contempt for Bancroft helped to mitigate her pain. She didn't suffer so much when she regarded him as Berthe's lover. But she must find out the truth. How could she? Let him come and see her? She must not give herself away, and she could soon see where the truth lay. She sat down at once and wrote him a little note:

"I can see you to-morrow at half-past ten. Please come to our sitting-room, No. 54 on the third floor;" and she signed it.

When she came down to dinner, she felt that she was not at her best. Her father looked at her again and again, trying to study her without being seen. Her heart went out in a little sob of love to him. "He sees the change in me, and wants to know the reason. Dear Father!" Her mother was as she always was. She wanted to know whether they should go to the Opera, or if Jenny preferred to stay at home; she was afraid that her headache was no better.

Jenny said at once that she would go; *Aïda* was on, and *Aïda* was a favorite of hers. She made up her mind to go, and she went.

But for the first time *Aïda* failed to interest her; she heard nothing of it; her thoughts persisted in jumping from pain to hope, from hope to doubt again, and from

doubt to anger which only half disguised the ache of unfulfilled desire.

"My mind acts for all the world like a monkey in a cage," she said to herself, "jumping up and down, up and down, till it is sore."

Long before the opera was ended, her headache had become blinding. The pain drove her to a dose of bromidia, and she got a heavy, drugged sleep. When she woke it was to a leaden consciousness of misery and loss. It was too painful: she wouldn't think of it any more: she'd just wait for ten-thirty and hear what he had to say.

Punctually he came into the room. The first glance told him that something had happened. "Her mother has hurt her," he said to himself, and hurried to take her in his arms and kiss her pain away. To his surprise, she drew back.

"I've not been well," she said. "Please tell me what you wanted to see me about."

"Won't you tell me first what your mother said?" he asked.

"It can wait," she answered enigmatically. "Your story comes first; please tell it."

"It's about your maid, Berthe," he said simply. "She was sent away so late in the spring that she missed the Paris season, and now she can't get work, it appears, and is, I believe, very poor, destitute, indeed. I wanted you to do something for her."

He confessed it then! His words turned her to marble.

"What do you want me to do for her?" she asked quietly.

"I thought you might take her on again," he said simply.

"You did!" she replied, smiling. "Why should you take such an interest in a cast-off servant?"

"As it was our trip up in the car that made you send her away," he said, "I feel guilty in regard to her."

"You feel guilty, do you?" She laughed outright. "I don't wonder!"

"What do you mean?" he asked, trying to take her in his arms.

"Mean?" she repeated, avoiding him and speaking with sharp directness. "I have only one question to ask you. Did you give her money to allay your guilt?"

"I don't know how you knew it," he replied, "but I did give her five hundred francs."

"That's enough," she said. "Now you can go."

"There are things," he replied, "that you should not suspect me of; there are things you should not say."

"I'll say whatever I choose," she replied, "and if you don't like the truth, you needn't wait."

"Jenny, Jenny!" he cried, "you'll be sorry for this when you think it over. You are unjust. What have I done to make you angry?"

"What have you done?" she cried, moving to the window and drawing the curtain aside. "There," and she

pointed below, "on the very spot you met me, you meet that servant; you walk about and talk with her, and take her hand morning after morning, and give her money, and then you come and ask me what you have done to make me angry. I'm not angry; I'm disgusted —dirtied. Five hundred francs, indeed! Now you can give her half a million more!" And she tossed her head in the air.

The insult was plain.

"You must not speak so to me," he replied. "When I was only your chauffeur, it didn't matter. Now I love you, it degrades us."

"You mustn't speak of love to me," she burst out bitterly. "I forbid you to. Go and talk love to the servant; it suits you better!"

"Do you know what you're saying?"

"I know perfectly well, and mean every word I say."

"Then I'm sorry for you," he went on. "There's nothing to be done but let you think it over; you'll perhaps see how wrong you've been."

"There's only one person always right," she cried. "You ought to be called 'Mr. Right,'" and she laughed. "Now, go! I hope the chauffeur and the maid will be happy together," and she turned away as if dismissing him.

He looked at her with a touch of contempt. "The spoilt child in her," he said to himself. "Can anything be done?" he asked himself. "Nothing!" was the answer. He bowed simply.

"Good-bye, then: good-bye," he repeated, "since you will have it so."

She bowed her head like a queen, and followed him with her eyes as he went. And after he had gone she busied herself in the room. Suddenly, as by an afterthought, she went to the window to watch him leave the hotel.

Bancroft went downstairs a little angry but more astonished. He could not believe Jenny's anger would hold. "To-morrow," he said, "I'll hear from her. It's too idiotic!"

In the hall he came upon Berthe. He had forgotten even that he had told her to come: chance was serving him badly. He went to her at once.

"I'm sorry," he said, "but Miss Foxwell won't engage you again. I'm very sorry."

"She's been angry, eh?" cried Berthe. "Oh, I know her: cold, but furious underneath; says devilish things. She's a cat, if you like!"

"You mustn't speak so," Bancroft reproved her gravely.

But Berthe had a temper, too, and was in no mood to be reproved.

"Whoever marries her," she cried, "is to be pitied. She treats everyone as if they were dirt under her feet. You might think she had come from *la cuisse de Jupiter*. Oh, la! la!" and she laughed discordantly, bitterly, for she had allowed herself to hope that Bancroft's inter-

vention on her behalf would be successful, and the disappointment angered her.

To cut short the ribaldry, Bancroft moved to the door, and Berthe went with him. Mechanically he crossed the street, still accompanied by her. At the first entrance to the gardens, he stopped.

"I'm sorry for your disappointment," he said simply, "I wish I could do something; but I'm afraid I'm powerless. Still if I can help you in any way, I will. If you need anything, let me know: won't you? I hope you'll get a place soon."

Berthe nodded and thanked him.

"There's nothing to be done," she added, "the bad luck must change soon," and went her way.

Bancroft lifted his hat and walked down towards the river.

Miss Foxwell watched the whole scene from her window in amazement. "He had her waiting," she said to herself in wonder, "and took leave of her before my eyes to make me believe there was nothing in it. What impudence!"

She went straight to her mother.

"Let's go out, Mother," she said. "I want to amuse myself. Let's lunch in the Bois and have a drive afterwards."

Mrs. Foxwell assented blithely. She needed no explanation; everything was turning out right, she felt, as she knew from the beginning it must; and what more could anyone want?

CHAPTER XXII

AFTER lunch, Mrs. Foxwell, seeing that the iron was hot, determined to strike.

"Why shouldn't we let Mr. Bancroft go?" she said. "It's a great shame to keep him doing nothing. No doubt he wants to be at some work."

Mr. Foxwell looked curiously at his daughter. "That puts it up to Jenny," he said to himself. But Jenny paid no attention; did not appear, indeed, to hear the remark. He therefore replied casually:

"Well, if you and Jenny agree, I'll tell him we'd like him to think himself free."

"Please tell him he's free," chimed in Jenny, "quite free."

Mr. Foxwell was just a little surprised.

"What has the missis been up to?" he asked himself. "Girls are pretty hard to understand; but the mother can usually drive 'em wherever she likes. Knowledge is power, every time." Aloud he added:

"I think I'd rather see him than write. We mustn't forget we owe him kindness. But I know where he garages, and I shall probably be able to see him this afternoon or to-morrow morning."

And so it was settled.

After taking his wife and daughter round the Bois and back into Paris, and leaving them at a famous dressmaker's, Mr. Foxwell went off to find Bancroft.

Bancroft had had a bad night of it. When he left Berthe he was very angry with Jenny; she had been wildly wrong, he thought, and foolish, and had shown merciless temper besides. "A spoilt child at her very worst," he said to himself again and again. But by the time he had walked to the Seine, and stood where they had stood the day before, he had begun to excuse her because he loved her.

"After all," he said to himself, "her jealousy of Berthe is really love, as vinegar is wine turned sour, and if I delight in her passionate affection, I have no business to blame her passionate jealousy."

With this feeling in him, he took a certain pleasure in recalling her defiance and resentment. How lovely she had looked with her head in the air, and the inscrutable eyes, inscrutable even in anger, deep, mysterious!

The eyes that didn't even show anger brought another suspicion to him. Could it be that she wasn't acting as a spoilt child, but that for some reason or other she had made up her mind to go back and become Lady Favershall? Could it be that at heart she was a social "climber," as he had once believed? Women did think a lot of titular distinctions. To be called "my lady" must please pride; high and assured position would tempt almost any girl. No, he decid[illegible]—no, it was the spoilt child

in her, very human and engaging; loveable, but exasperating.

Now what was he to do? He considered the whole position. Suppose, when her anger had passed, she wanted him back at once: should he go? His pride revolted, and at once suggested the twenty thousand pounds! He oughtn't to have taken it, he decided at once, though he only took it to show her that she was completely free. But he had no business to touch it: she had referred to it angrily; she must never be able to do that again. He resolved to send it back at once! He was glad now he hadn't touched it. He could wire the order to his banker to pass the securities back to Mr. Foxwell's account just as he had received them. And then?

What was he to do next? He would wait and see what she would do. But she ought to be taught what love meant. The luminous idea came to him: "She can only be taught that by losing it, or by fearing she has lost it. It was when I thought she was engaged to Lord Favershall and I had lost her for ever that I really learnt how much I cared for her. She ought to have the same lesson. I'll send the money back," he said to himself, "now, to-day, and I'll bury myself in Paris and go on with my work. I'll take a room somewhere up near the Gardens of the Luxembourg, where it's quiet, and sit down and write my book. They say poverty is a good thing for the writer—certainly it's a great spur. If I keep my car, and I intend to keep it, I haven't more

than two or three years before me, but in two or three years it ought to be quite clear whether I'm a writer or not, quite plain whether there's anything of the artist in me. In any case, Jenny has taught me a lot—Jenny!"

His heart contracted painfully at the thought of how he should miss her, even for a week—miss her dreadfully. With all her faults she was the only woman in the world for him, peerless, passionate Jenny. But it was best so; it would be best for both of them in the long run. Jenny must learn the value of love as he had learnt it.

Standing there in the Gardens where they had stood together, and looking down on the Seine, he determined to act. He was only a few hundred yards from the General Post Office. He walked up the street to the office and wired the order to his banker, he followed this up with a formal letter, and then crossed the river and found rooms almost opposite the Observatoire in the old rue St. Jacques, very quiet and very cheap—seventy francs a month for sitting-room and bedroom. He lunched in the *Quartier,* and returned at two o'clock to get his car. He found Mr. Foxwell's message waiting for him.

"What does he want to see me about?" he wondered, as he made his way to the hotel.

Mr. Foxwell met him in the hall and took him into the waiting room.

"I don't know exactly what's happened, Mr. Bancroft," he said, "or what you've done; but there's been some

sort of a flare-up, and I've to obey orders. The ladies wish you to regard yourself as free. Now, just what that means, and how long that determination will last, I'm not prepared to say. Jenny is worked up about something, and her mother, too, knows about it and is content. But that's as far as I've been able to understand. Perhaps you know more?"

"Miss Foxwell is angry," replied Bancroft, "because I tried to get her to take back Berthe, her French maid, you know. She found out—I don't know how—that I gave Berthe some money, and was very angry with me."

"H'm—'m," said Mr. Foxwell. "That wasn't very wise of you, was it? I mean, to be found out," he added humorously. "It is those little kindnesses that get us into the worst sort of trouble," he concluded, with his quizzical smile.

His light treatment of the matter annoyed Bancroft a little.

"As you don't want me any more as chauffeur," he said coldly, "I have this little account against you, and it may as well be settled now. Sixteen days at the two hundred and sixty francs agreed on, makes four thousand francs."

Mr. Foxwell's eyes narrowed. He hadn't expected to pay this in addition to the hundred thousand dollars he had given.

"I'm beginning to think you're a business man, Mr. Bancroft," he remarked quietly. "But it's all right; I'll give you a check."

"Perhaps you don't quite understand," Bancroft explained. "This morning I sent an order to my bankers in London to re-transfer to you the bonds you so kindly gave me. I oughtn't to have taken your money at first, but I only took it because I thought Miss Foxwell was engaged to Lord Favershall and wanted to feel free in regard to me. You will no doubt hear to-morrow from your bankers that the bonds have been returned to you. Besides wiring, I wrote and expressed the letter."

"Now, that's foolish," said Mr. Foxwell. "You must see that's not common sense. You did us a great service; you got pretty badly hurt doing it. I thought, and still think, you should be paid. I've done nothing to make you throw the money back in my face in this way, and it's not sensible. You want the money to live on and do your work. Take it and go right ahead with it, and don't be foolish. In my opinion, all this trouble between you and Jenny will blow over. The mother's against you, it is true, and Jenny's very proud and quick; but she's good at heart—real affectionate and loving—and I guess she'll be sorry for anything she's done hastily."

Bancroft shook his head.

"I'm sorry to differ from you," he said, "but I don't act without thinking the matter over, and I'm certain I'm right. No man should take gifts in this world."

"A sensible man," insisted Mr. Foxwell, "gets money enough to live on in comfort any way he can. That's the first thing he does in life—his first object. To give it up

when he's got it, is to play the fool. Don't you do it; it annoys me. My first hundred thousand dollars were not so easily made, but if anyone had tried to get them out of me, he'd have had his hands full. I've never touched that first hundred thousand dollars," he went on meditatively—"never, and never shall. It has doubled itself since, and more. Money doubles itself at five per cent. compound interest every fourteen years, and that was thirty-two years ago, and I've had more than five per cent. on it, counting the growth in capital value. I guess that first hundred thousand has now become five hundred thousand, and there it stays and shall stay. Don't you give up your security and liberty," he concluded; "don't you do it. That money'll help you in every way to make good."

"It's already done," said Bancroft; "but I'm none the less obliged to you for your constant kindness and goodwill. I have learnt something, too," he added, "through knowing you. I hope we shall meet again."

"I expect we shall," replied Mr. Foxwell, getting up. "But I don't like the Don Quixote in you: that's the weak point in your armor, and I guess you'll have to pay for it yet. The Don got hurt even by the windmill, you know," and he smiled humorously.

The two men shook hands and left each other in this good-tempered spirit. Bancroft took his car and ran across the river to the new garage and settled down to his work.

He would write a novel, he said to himself, but he

wasn't quite clear just how to set about it; and, strange to say, now that the whole matter was settled, he was greatly depressed. He hadn't thought of it at first, but Jenny's quick resolve to get rid of him made him look on the future very hopelessly. In spite of himself, he began to think that Lord Favershall's influence had something to do with her decision—that and her mother's resolution. The father felt it, too, he thought. That was what he meant by saying she was "proud and quick." He, too, was afraid lest the spoilt child should come to some irrevocable decision.

"Well, I can do nothing in the matter," he summed up. "She must just learn the lesson or refuse to learn it, and meantime I must work."

But his heart was as heavy as lead in him, and the pain grew sharper as the days dragged on.

That evening before dinner Mr. Foxwell went into his daughter's room and watched her complete her toilette in front of the glass.

"I have had a talk with Mr. Bancroft, Jenny," he said. "I told him he was free, and he rather astonished me by asking me for his fifteen or sixteen days' pay. Of course I gave it to him; it was due to him, strictly speaking, but it surprised me."

Jenny shrugged her shoulders. "Nothing he does would surprise me," she remarked coldly.

"Well, it surprised me," repeated her father—"surprised me considerably till he told me he had ordered his bankers to pay me back that hundred thousand dol-

lars we gave him. I told him he was silly, and pressed him to keep it, but he wouldn't. He said he had only taken it because he thought you were engaged to Lord Favershall and wanted him to take the money in order to be free of any obligation, but now, as you had altered your mind, he wouldn't keep it." His eyes searched his daughter's face as he spoke, but as she seemed impassive, he went on: "I couldn't make him keep it, Jenny. I told him that sending it back seemed to me foolish."

"Very foolish," said Jenny, arranging her hat before the long glass; "but it's got nothing to do with us."

"If that's the way you look at it," said her father, "it don't cut much ice any way. But he loves you, I guess."

"Nonsense!" she said, shrugging her shoulders, and went on touching her lips with the red salve.

CHAPTER XXIII

LEFT to herself, Jenny felt at once that her father thought her action hasty and ill-advised, and this consciousness came like a cold douche on her hot temper. But the facts were there: nothing anyone could say would alter them, and as she thought again of Bancroft's meetings with Berthe, and his giving her money, and, worst of all, his bringing her with him to the hotel without saying a word about it, her anger flamed up again. If Berthe had been pretty, even, or refined looking, she could have forgiven him, she thought; but she had a servant's face and a servant's manner and a servant's soul—she was common and low. Jenny stamped her foot. She wouldn't think of him any more.

She meant to amuse herself for a fortnight, enjoy Paris and all it had to offer. Backed by her mother, she did her best. Whenever the pair were in doubt, off they went to spend hours in some famous dressmaker's. Worth and Paquin tried their uttermost to please them. Jenny, they said, had a wonderful figure; she was a *faux maigre*, delicious—*à croquer,* and had wonderful coloring; and, they might have added, with even more truth and pro-

founder admiration, a bottomless purse. Grunevald, too, designed her an opera cloak of chinchilla that threw up the delicate tones of her skin and hair to perfection; and it was quite cheap—given away, indeed—only five thousand dollars. But dressmakers' inventions are soon exhausted, and dressmakers' compliments too manifestly mouth-worship to be flattering; and Jenny was quite clear-sighted enough to realize that the praise lavished on her by society was hardly more sincere.

In spite of all her efforts to kill time and distract herself, the pain at her heart would not be charmed away, and the black hours of doubt and despair returned more and more frequently and lasted longer.

Deep down in her was the belief that some day it would be all right. Bancroft would come back and explain everything, and beg her forgiveness, and take her in his arms again, and love her; and Jenny's eyes filled with hot, sweet tears at the thought, and she could hardly bear to wait. But wait she did, with all a woman's patience, for eight or ten days, while Bancroft made no sign.

There were five posts in each day, and Jenny got into the habit of waiting from post to post; but nothing ever came. It was sickening. Now she raged and now she wept, but there was never a word—mere blank silence which at length began to make her afraid. Suppose he never came back—suppose he was with Berthe. She quickly banished that supposition as preposterous; she felt it wasn't true. But perhaps he had found someone

else. The waiting, the doubt, grew more and more intolerable.

As soon as the possibility of losing him entirely presented itself, she began to feel at once how intensely she wanted him, how completely she had regarded him as hers and hers alone. It was maddening even to think of losing him altogether—maddening! But what was to be done? Should she eat her pride and write to him? But where? She didn't know his address.

Oh, the misery, the desolation of the blank silence! What was she to do? She had been so happy, so interested; it was dreadful to lose it all so foolishly.

For now she saw plainly that the quarrel was of her making. Why didn't she ask him for an explanation, let him take her in his arms as he had wanted to? Oh, if he only had! She knew all her anger would have vanished. Why didn't he? He should have; and she got cross with him at the thought. How quiet he had been, how patient under her insults! Oh, he would never forgive her! And she burst into tears.

Meanwhile, her father had been watching her. Her temper in the beginning, her feverish activity, her extravagance, her waiting for the post—he had noted them all. One day he had a talk with his wife.

"Jenny's looking bad," he began; "she ain't happy. I guess she's in love with Bancroft."

"Nonsense!" cried Mrs. Foxwell, "the girl's thinking of nothing but London, and of seeing Lord Favershall again."

"Well, you ought to know better than anyone," replied Mr. Foxwell; "but I think you'll find you're mistaken."

"Leave it to me," said Mrs. Foxwell. "I know her, and her happiness is as dear to me as my own."

Mr. Foxwell looked at her without any expression whatever in his searching, keen eyes.

"All right," he said. "I guess I don't want to butt in where I'm not wanted; but——"

Mrs. Foxwell felt that there was a steady conviction behind his speech, and she realized at once that she must try to persuade him, or he would take his own line of action. Though he seldom interfered with her, whenever he did make up his mind to act, opposition, she knew, was futile.

"You know as well as I do how proud Jenny is, and how self-willed," she began. "She can make Lord Favershall do whatever she wants him to do; he'll just be her slave right along, and in her heart Jenny knows that's what she wants in life: a big position and a lover husband who thinks the world of her. Her first child will make her the happiest woman in England. I only wish those agents of yours would get our house ready in London. Here the child has nobody she cares for, and naturally she misses Bancroft. He talked well, and interested her. But as soon as we get to London, and she really begins to know what English life is like, and what a great position in it means, Jenny'll be all right."

"I don't like to see her reddening her lips," said Mr. Foxwell, "and powdering her face so that you can't see

the skin. The girl ain't looking well, but if you say London'll make all the difference, we can wait and see. I guess there's no immediate hurry. People don't die of love, anyway."

That evening a certain Prince made himself very nice indeed to Jenny. He was evidently enthralled by her beauty and by the inscrutable, intent eyes. He followed her about the whole evening, danced with her again and again, got both her father and mother presented to him, and asked permission to call. Mrs. Foxwell was delighted.

"He's a Bourbon," she burst out in the auto on their way back to the hotel, "and in the direct line. He might be King of France one day. All the women were just wild with rage, and wilder still because you showed no sign of caring. You just acted perfectly, Jenny, and I was proud of you."

She said everything she could to flatter the girl's vanity and enhance the value of the conquest, but the result was the direct opposite of her wish. The moment Jenny's injured pride was salved and ceased to sting her, her true nature showed itself.

On their way across the hall in the hotel, she said to her father:

"Please come to me before you go to bed!"

Mr. Foxwell simply nodded, smiling.

He came just when she had taken her dress and corset off, and had thrown a loose gold and blue kimono about her shoulders preparatory to taking her hair down and

making her usual toilet for the night. The pallor of her face, something a little drawn in the lines, added to the spiritual beauty of it. Her father's heart went out to her in tenderness: she was hardly more than a child, he thought, and too pretty for words.

"I wanted to see you, Father," she began. But he interrupted her.

"You look dead tired, Jenny. If I were you, I'd go to sleep as quickly as possible and get a long rest. Then you'll be ready to finish the Prince off in the morning," he added humorously.

"Oh, bother the Prince, anyway!" retorted Jenny. "Do you know where Mr. Bancroft is?"

"I don't know, but I guess I could find out."

"Please find out and go to see him. You might tell him you want him to take that money. You might just say at the same time that we're going over to England, and that he ought to call before we go."

Mr. Foxwell shook his head.

"I'd leave it, Jenny, if I were you," he said, with his wife's remarks still present in his mind. "I'd go over to London and see how you like that life for a month or two before making up your mind. Of course, I'll do anything you say, but I'd wait if I were you. It's only a month——"

Jenny was as imperious as ever.

"I want you to find him," she said. "I want you to see him—see what he's doing and planning."

"All right, daughter," said her father. "Now you just

get to bed and sleep, and I'll do my best. The Prince'll be coming to lunch, and I don't want to see any powder on your face; I want my girl just as she is." And he took her in his arms and kissed her.

The task of finding Bancroft next morning was harder than Mr. Foxwell had imagined. In the hotel they knew nothing: no letters had come for him, and he hadn't called for any. In the garage, the same answer. Mr. Foxwell came back to the hotel to think the matter over. The police might know; but how could he approach the police or induce them to give him an address? Jenny met him in the sitting-room, and, much to his relief, told him she had changed her mind.

"I was wrought up last night," she said, "and didn't consider what I was doing. But, even at the time, I knew you were right when you told me to try a month in London before deciding anything. I've determined to do that. I'm glad on the whole that you couldn't find him. Now for the Prince!" she added, gaily laughing.

Mr. Foxwell shrugged his shoulders. Women were incomprehensible at any given moment, but simple enough, he admitted, when you studied their actions over a certain period. He drew no deduction from this fact, though he would have, had he cared for them more deeply.

The truth was that Jenny was acting exactly as anyone who knew the facts would have expected her to act. The night before, her mother had been amazed at the cool way Jenny took her conquest of the Prince. She

felt sure that for some reason or other Jenny was not eager even to flirt with the Prince.

"She has made up her mind," said Mrs. Foxwell to herself, "to get Bancroft back and make it up."

That was a consummation to be hindered at all costs. But how? One way presented itself at once to her imagination.

"If I said I saw Bancroft with Berthe again, Jenny's pride would be up in arms for months. She would go to London in the proper temper, and Lord Favershall would marry her hot-foot before she had had time to cool."

But dare she risk the lie? Lies, as she had early found with her husband, were parlous, dangerous weapons, and had a trick of cutting the hand that used them. Could she be found out in this instance? Hardly a chance, unless Bancroft and Jenny ever got together again. But even then, if Jenny challenged her about it, she could easily say she must have been mistaken; she had seen him so often with Berthe (for that first lie had passed unperceived) that it had got into her head.

And, once she made up her mind to lie, she chose the moment perfectly, and lied with circumstance and conviction. The Prince had been charming all through the luncheon, and Jenny had entered into the spirit of the scene and flirted with him outrageously. He got really *empressé* at the end, and didn't appear to notice that Jenny, instead of getting serious, grew more light-hearted

and gay. But nothing of this escaped Mrs. Foxwell, who saw in it the confirmation of her worst suspicion.

"She will be running back to Bancroft," she said to herself, "unless she's stopped. I must get her over to London as soon as I can."

When the two went up together after luncheon to their rooms, preparatory to taking the Prince for a drive in the Bois:

"You didn't tell me, dear," said her mother, "how Mr. Bancroft explained his meetings with Berthe and his giving her money."

"He didn't trouble to explain," said Jenny. "Why? Is there any explanation?" and her eyes searched her mother coolly.

"As I drove from the Boulevard St. Germain this morning," replied her mother, "he passed me in his car going toward the Etoile, and Berthe was sitting beside him."

"Berthe!" cried Jenny. "Are you sure?"

"I didn't see her face," said the mother, "but you know my eyes are pretty good. It was Berthe all right, with her eyes pinned on his."

The expression gave Jenny a pang; it recalled a moment in the car on their first acquaintance. Berthe then, too, had her eyes pinned on Bancroft.

The sinking feeling in her was aggravated to acute pain, but she resolved to conquer it and she did.

"He has a right to take out anyone he wants," she

said coldly. "He seems to like servants. Strange taste, but still——"

"Men are strange in that way," said her mother. "Are you going to accept the Prince's invitation to the Opera?" she broke off irrelevantly. "Or should we make up our minds to go to London? The house is practically ready."

"Oh, let's go to London," said Jenny. "I'm tired of this place. There's no one decent to talk to in the whole town."

Her mother sighed a little softly to herself, smiling as a cat might smile after enjoying a little stolen cream. There are compensations even in this world when one is really clever and knows what one wants.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE next week was taken up with crossing to England and settling down in Carlton House Terrace. Mr. Foxwell hadn't much taste in art or house decoration, but he had the millionaire's habit of going to the biggest people in the trade, and the able man's knack of quickly recognizing any capable man with whom he came in contact. He went to an Oxford Street firm for the decoration of his house, and in the course of talking it over, he found all the heads of the house referring to a Mr. Prinsep, and when he met Mr. Prinsep he saw at once that he had ideas and knew his work. Naturally, he didn't give Mr. Prinsep a free hand, but he trusted him sufficiently to get good conventional work out of him, which is about all the man who is not himself an artist can expect to get. When Mr. Prinsep had finished, the Foxwell house, from being merely a set of comfortable rooms, had a certain air about it, a note of sound knowledge, if the taste was rather too eclectic. The drawing-room was pure Louis Quinze, the bedrooms were Chippendale, the hall and dining-room displayed a sort of Gothic revival. Mr. Prinsep had never completely outgrown the old oak period.

Jenny felt that the decoration was pedantic, without

any individuality of taste. She knew that Bancroft would laugh at it all, and she contrived by little changes here and there to tone down and assimilate the jarring incongruities of style. It gave her a good deal to do for the first fortnight or so, and by that time her social duties had become so numerous that she was fully occupied.

At first Jenny was inclined to be critical of London. The house, as we have said, didn't please her acute sensibility; but it was near the center, the rooms were large, and the servants seemed to her excellently trained. All the appointments for sensual living were superb. Life, as the ordinary man and woman understand it, is more comfortable in London than anywhere else in the world.

"It is not only the rooms," Jenny said, "but life that's carpeted to perfection. Everything is noiseless, soft, easy." And she gave herself up to the enjoyment of delightful comfort.

The one drawback was the climate. It rained almost every day, and when it didn't rain it was gray and gloomy. The grime and dirt, the smuts of the unused coal-smoke, were loathsome, made her think rather contemptuously of a people who allowed their capital city to be so defiled. Even New York, with its laws preventing the smoke nuisance, was better governed. But she soon grew accustomed to the smuts and dirt, and a fine day when it came was very beautiful, the more desirable for its excessive rarity.

And just as the bodily needs are better cared for in London than anywhere else, so she soon found that the social life of London was organized and ordered to a perfectness she had no conception of. In New York one went out to dinners two or three times a week, to luncheons and country clubs less frequently; but here in London every moment was filled: luncheons and dinners, afternoon parties and dances were arranged weeks and weeks beforehand. The only trouble was how to choose amid a dozen invitations for every function. Of course, the crowd of invitations was due to Lord Favershall, and it was Lord Favershall, too, who showed them how to select; and, directed by that skilful amateur, every morning had its pleasure, every afternoon its enjoyment, every evening its amusement.

At the end of a month, Jenny admitted that there never was any social life like it in the world—such ease and kindness of hospitality, such cleverness in pleasing the senses, such an atmosphere of cheerful goodwill she had never met before. And there was about everything —the people she met, the houses she went to—a certain note of distinction which charmed her. All these people were like a happy family, and yet they were at the center of things and knew all about the steering of the ship of state. They were passengers, so to speak, whom the captain and officers were delighted to confer with and to honor.

For a month or more she was swept off her feet. At the end of five or six weeks she became capable of esti-

mating the peculiarities of Lord Favershall's influence. He knew everybody and was liked by everybody. But he was most at home in planning out-of-door amusements, and when he wanted to exert his wits or to amuse himself intellectually he arranged a political dinner, believing the politicians to be the best intellectual gladiators.

Jenny soon remarked that society talk in London was never intellectual. Horses and dogs could always be discussed with understanding; but not poetry or pictures, and abstract ideas or arresting personalities were taboo. You could mention a new play or novel, but it had to be spoken of as something unimportant, whereas a dull debate in the Commons was discussed with interest, and a mediocre general who had slaughtered a handful of savages was regarded as a hero, almost as important, indeed, as a millionaire. The estimates were all brainless and shockingly material.

After spending some afternoons at Kempton Park and day after day at Ascot, Jenny had had enough of racing. Her eyebrows went up when Lord Favershall kept proposing this or that meeting, as if it were a crime to miss one. She preferred to spend her afternoons at Hurlingham or Ranelagh, and when she had been to each of these places half a dozen times, and had met exactly the same people each time, she began to realize that outdoor amusements even in London were limited, and she got tired even sooner of the constant succession of elaborate luncheons and dinners. It was all interest-

ing at first, bright and gay and pleasant; but the shallowness of it all soon began to weary her.

"The people one meets," she said to herself, "never talk of anything but of each other, and of their wins and losses at bridge or at races, and of their flirtations and love affairs. They are casual acquaintances, marionettes, not real people."

Naturally enough, Lord Favershall went out with them a good deal. Everywhere Jenny was regarded as his *fiancée,* and envied and flattered therefore to an extraordinary extent. In nothing was the difference between American society and English so marked as in the different estimate of men and women. Women were honored in America, but men in England. Again and again Jenny's indignation was aroused by the calm assumption on every hand of masculine superiority. English women, she noticed, were always running after men, making up to them, cajoling their weak points with an openness she thought silly and contemptible; and a person like Lord Favershall, with youth, good looks, title and position, was pursued by half a dozen of them with an unscrupulous determination that annoyed Jenny to exasperation. "What fools the women make of themselves!" was the burden of her thought. True, Lord Favershall took the incense very well; he was "bon prince" always, but he would have been more than human if the constant adulation hadn't left him with an overgood conceit of himself.

For the first three or four weeks he represented in

Jenny's mind much of the glamour of English life: he was part of the easy comfort and distinction and pleasure of the whole thing. He had introduced her to his mother, and Jenny took a great fancy to her. In spite of being a little stout, Lady Favershall was still very good-looking, with perfect skin and bright, happy ways. Jenny liked her unfeignedly; she had never known a woman so honest and kindly and simple. And she was amused, too, by the little touch of slang in her speech.

"I am very glad," she said on one of their first meetings, "you and Hugh are hitting it off. He's a dear boy, really—of course, a little spoiled, as all mothers' darlings are apt to be." (The smiling confession revealed greater shrewdness than Jenny had given her credit for.) "But a little conceit is not a bad thing to have in life."

"Your money, too," she said frankly on another occasion, "will make Basset wonderful. It's already one of the dearest places in the world, but if one could keep it up properly, it would be delightful. Even Basset has never had so lovely a châtelaine."

She couldn't guess how the word "châtelaine" carried Jenny's thoughts back to that golden afternoon spent at Vergy. Basset could hardly compete with that memory.

"You take it all for granted," said Jenny, "and that is very sweet of you; but I have not made up my mind yet. You mustn't be angry with me if——"

"No, indeed, my dear," said Lady Favershall, taking her hand and petting it in both hers. "I shall never be

angry with you, but I can't help being young enough to hope when I see you together. That vanity is permitted even to an old woman, isn't it?"

After the first six weeks or two months, the life in London began to pall on Jenny. She knew all the chief personages of the play by this time, and the excitement and charm of meeting new people had passed away. The glamour, too, of great names and great positions had vanished, and unlovely faces had begun to appear still more repulsive to her when set off with coronets. Something thin and shallow, sensual and base in the whole life had begun to infect her.

One night there had been a political dinner, and she had been seated beside one of the most famous Ministers. He had talked to her with the off-hand air of a god, and by the end of dinner his pompous, fluent phrases, his matter-of-fact soul and commonplace mind, had become grotesque to her. When Lord Favershall met her in the drawing-room, he said:

"Glad to see you talking to George Courtney; an able man, isn't he?"

Jenny was surprised almost out of her courtesy.

"Able?" she exclaimed. "I thought him ridiculous. He never says a new thing; he has no conception, even, that there are new things to be said in the world. He thinks florid platitudes a gospel."

"Oh, I say," laughed Lord Favershall delightedly, "that's rather good, don't you know. He ought to hear that florid platitudes aren't a gospel. But I think you're

a little hard on him, you know. You hardly expect to hear a new gospel in Park Lane."

"No, indeed," she answered, laughing. "You're right there. It is, indeed, the very last place in the world where one would expect to find a prophet."

"A jolly good thing, too, I imagine," he went on seriously. "Newfangled notions are never any good. For myself, I don't care for those fellows who talk much. George Courtney is like your chauffeur friend; either of them could talk the hind leg off a dog, don't you know."

Jenny looked at him. He was really amazing. Could he see no difference between Bancroft and Courtney? The mere putting of the two together revealed to her all the difference between mediocrity and greatness.

"You surely don't class Mr. Bancroft with Courtney?" she asked.

"No, no," he said; "of course not. I only meant that they were both thought clever and conceited at Oxford; but of course Courtney is in the running to be Prime Minister, and that's very different from the chauffeur fellow."

"Very different, indeed," was all she found to say, still looking at him. She was really seeing him for the first time, so to speak, through the other end of the telescope. In spite of his height and good looks, and name and easy assurance, he was in reality a little person, a mere conventional figure to whom the established things, the accepted values, in life were everything, who had no idea at all that life was like a sea whose surface

was changing every moment, real persons emerging, lifting themselves higher and higher, becoming more and more significant, while the millions of unreal, conventional people were all disappearing, submerged.

CHAPTER XXV

AS soon as Jenny began to see London life in its true perspective, she quickly tired of it. The constant succession of amusements and engagements exhausted her, physically as well as mentally. She turned at once to her father for rest and change.

"They are always talking of the beauty of English scenery, Father," she said one morning. "Couldn't we have a motor car and see some of it?"

"Nothing easier," replied Mr. Foxwell, and began to make arrangements for a trip through Surrey and Sussex, returning through Hampshire—a trip that would last a week. But Mrs. Foxwell wouldn't hear of such a thing in the height of the season. There was a garden party at Windsor which they must not miss for anything.

"Count me out," she said, "if you want to go flying about the country. I prefer to see Windsor, and I want to do something really interesting for Goodwood. That's the last race meeting near London, and they say it's beautiful. You'll see all the scenery there you want. I should like to take a place near the racecourse and keep open house for the three or four days." Mrs. Foxwell talked now almost like an English peeress.

Mr. Foxwell arranged everything to her satisfaction. As the time for the motor trip drew near, Mrs. Foxwell's insistence on the necessity of keeping this and that engagement cut the tour down to a couple of days. Even then the father and daughter had to go alone.

The first day they visited Boxhill and Leith Hill and the Hindhead, sleeping at Brighton, and the next day they returned over Arundel, by Sussex lanes, to London. They were all ready to go to the royal garden party at Windsor together, and so conciliated Mrs. Foxwell.

The little trip gave Jenny the rest she needed. It helped, too, to clear her ideas. English scenery, she used to say, was like an English Sunday crowd, all very tidy and neat, wearing a sort of Sunday livery. Here and there glimpses of pretty faces, no dust, no noise, but no real enjoyment either—nothing to lift one, everything a little smug and commonplace. She preferred the wide reaches of America; she wouldn't give up White Sulphur Springs, she decided, or the mountain valleys of Western Virginia and the New River for any English scenery. It seemed paltry to her by comparison, and she wouldn't even compare it to the valley of the Romanche with its magical beauty.

All this time little or nothing has been said about Jenny's heart and emotions, because at first they were held torpid. She had made up her mind to accept Lord Favershall, and though she couldn't prevent herself seeing things as they were, though she was still determined, indeed, to see them with naked distinctness, she was

nevertheless resolved to marry him and settle down in England. The boyishness of him had a peculiar attraction for her: he was so young and so good-humored, so tactful, too, and so distinguished looking that three days out of four he really pleased her. He had the gift of boyish high spirits, was always willing to go here or do that. He was quite ready even to accompany the father and daughter on their motor trip, though it was plain he preferred to stay in London. Jenny knew that if he had accompanied them he would never have been out of place, much less obtrusive.

"Anyone could live with him," she said to herself after the first month in London; "any sensible woman could live with him and be quite happy. He is a good fellow, and in his own way means to be kind."

So she allowed their engagement to be announced, and met the fact of it, the congratulations and preparations, with satisfaction rather than repugnance. At the garden party at Windsor they were all distinguished by royal courtesy, thanks to Lord Favershall's diplomacy, and when he asked her afterwards if she wouldn't come to Basset just for a day, she consented willingly enough.

Basset was one of the great seats in Warwickshire, and could be reached easily in a couple of hours by train. The programme was that they should go there one morning and lunch, spend the afternoon seeing the house and driving about the park, and return after tea so as to get to London for dinner.

Basset made a great impression on Jenny. Ever after-

ward the park and place represented to her English life at its best. It was all so romantic, so ordered, so perfect in its way. The house was a mixture of castle and house, the park a mixture of forest and flower garden. The eccentricities of nature were everywhere combed down, tamed to regularity and smoothness. One room in the keep was a sort of armory; helmetted figures in coats of mail and plate armor stood about, and the walls were criss-crossed with strange weapons. You looked out of a window to a brawling stream sixty feet below, and beyond was green woodland. It was like a page out of one of Walter Scott's novels, she thought. The drawing-room, on the other hand, was a sunny, modern, comfortable place to live in. The service was perfect, the drive through the park enchanting. Jenny couldn't help wanting to see Kenilworth, and Kenilworth was reached in half an hour by motor.

"It's all beautiful," she said afterwards; "it's like living in a romance."

But the story, she felt, had no strong central interest; no great purpose; no hero.

"The romance will have the happiest ending for me, Jenny, won't it?" asked Lord Favershall appealingly.

Her deep eyes turned on him, intent, inscrutable; she nodded her head slowly, and let him take her hand and hold it. She allowed him to go further one evening, encouraged him even, if the truth must be told. They had dined at his mother's house in Grosvenor Square, and, after dinner he took her up to another room to

show her a portrait of a great-great-grandmother by Sir Peter Lely, whom she was supposed to resemble. Lely had given his countess the same auburn hair, but that was all the likeness Jenny could see.

"The most lovely hair in the world," Lord Favershall said; "a better shade than Titian's. But it goes with a passionate disposition, Jenny, and you're so cold," he added, putting his arms about her and kissing her.

She looked up at him disconcertingly, but let him kiss her without a word again and again.

"I want you to love me; I love you so," he said. "Won't you try, Jenny?"

"Why does he ask?" she said to herself. "Doesn't he know it's all a woman wants, to love? Why doesn't he make me love him, instead of asking me to?"

But he raved about her, told her she was divinely pretty, the prettiest woman he had ever seen in his life, the prettiest woman in England, and the cleverest. The compliments pleased her, gave her a vague stirring of sex.

After that evening Hugh Favershall became more and more loverlike, and, at the end of a ball at Seaforth House, where he conducted the cotillon with her to the admiration of everyone, he took her into the conservatory, determined to get her to name the day.

"I love you," he said, "with all my heart. When will you marry me, Jenny? I want you as soon as I can get you." And he sat down and drew her on to his knees and kissed her.

Jenny never talked much to him at any time, but she talked less than usual that evening. All he could get out of her was: "I'll think it over and let you know."

"But you like me, don't you?" he said.

"Of course, you know I like you," she answered. "I more than like you; I think you a very good fellow, charming and kind and very distinguished looking, and a great many other things that I won't tell you, or you'd get too vain. But marriage is a very serious thing, and——. Give me a few days."

Prompted by his mother, he consented cheerfully. "She's not properly hooked," said that simple lady, who had been a great fisherwoman in her youth, "and if you don't play her very lightly, you'll lose her." The warning had weight with her son.

On their way home Jenny closed her eyes and sat in the corner of the motor without speaking. Her father had gone home early, but her mother had stayed with her to the last—knew, indeed, what Lord Favershall intended to do, and was in heartiest sympathy with him.

"Are you tired, Jenny?" she asked on getting to the house. "I mean, would you like to sleep late in the morning? If so, you'd better tell them."

"No, no," said Jenny. "Good-night, Mother." And she went to her room.

Her maid helped her to take off her things, brought her *eau de Cologne,* and bathed her forehead, combed her hair and brushed it soothingly for half an hour, and left her for what remained of the night.

Jenny sat long before her great three-leaved toilet glass, almost without seeing herself, and then went into the bedroom and suddenly threw herself on the bed in tearless misery.

"I can't," she cried; "I can't! I've done my best, done all I could, and I can't! I simply can't marry Hugh Favershall. My God, he's a fool, and I can't stand fools! I want Bancroft. I don't want to want him, but I can't help it. I don't believe he was faithless, and I don't care a damn whether he was or not; I want him!"

And, like her father's daughter, she rang the bell with sharp decision, told her astonished, sleepy maid to get her a cup of strong tea at once and to prepare her bath, and at half-past six o'clock went downstairs to see her father.

CHAPTER XXVI

MR. FOXWELL was not very much surprised to see her. For some days past he had felt that a decision was imminent, but, from what he had seen and what his wife had told him, he imagined that Jenny had made up her mind to marry Lord Favershall. Her first words undeceived him.

"I want you to understand me, father," she began; "though, as I have only just begun to understand myself, you'll perhaps be surprised. All my life when I've been in any doubt I have regretted it if I didn't do what my brains told me I ought to do. I'm your daughter, you see! In all the small things of life my head has been the only satisfactory counsellor, and my head told me that Bancroft was too imperious and would boss me, and I didn't want to be bossed, even for my own good. I wanted to be praised and admired, and didn't want to be made better and wiser. My head told me to marry Hugh Favershall. Well, my head was wrong, Father; I can't do it," and she threw herself into an armchair.

"Why not?" said the father; "what's he done now?"

"It's nothing he has done," she replied. "He's nice and kind, and one could live with him all right, and he kisses you when he thinks you expect it—luke-warm kisses.

Oh, I suppose they'd get warmer if I tried to help him —I don't want to be unfair to him. He's everything that's nice, but I just don't want ever to see him again. There! And you must help me"—and she tapped her foot on the ground, looking mutinously pretty—all the prettier, indeed, because the sleepless night had made her a little paler and traced violet shadows under her fine eyes.

"Father, you must find Bancroft for me; you must go over and make it up with him and leave me to tell Mother. I love him, I can't bear to think of losing him. All this easy, carpeted life is no good without him, and with him I don't care a cent for the carpets or the pleasures. I suppose it's very unmaidenly to tell you all this, but I've no one else to tell, and I want you to feel sure that my mind is made up once for all."

"You're sure?" repeated her father, and she nodded: "Quite sure."

"All right, Jenny," he continued, getting up and seating himself on the arm of her chair and patting her cheek as he talked; "it must be possible to find Bancroft, though I don't believe it'll be as easy as you think. I can run across to Paris to-day, and sooner or later I'll find him. I've thought the matter over since you asked me before. His bankers may give me his address—I'll try them first; if they won't, the police in Paris must. I'll find him somehow. I guess within three days I shall see him. But what am I to say to him?"

"Any old thing!" cried Jenny. "Tell him he has be-

haved badly, and must come back to me. Bring him back. You can do anything you want to."

"Oh, pshaw!" exclaimed Mr. Foxwell. "I'll do it, Jenny, if you say so, but it'll be no good. The best way is for you to come over yourself and see him."

"Sure!" cried Jenny, flushing and sitting bolt upright; "of course, that's best. You wise daddy! Wire me when you've found him and I'll come right over. I'll tell Mother to-day what I'm going to do."

The father pulled a wry face.

"I know," she said, laughing, "that'll not be pleasant; but it must be done. Besides, Mother'll have to tell Lord Favershall. She deserves that."

"Like most young people, Jenny," said her father, "you are inclined to make one big mistake. You always want to put unpleasant things on others. Don't do it, Girlie. Lord Favershall is your stunt; you do that yourself. I'll see your mother about what she means to do—that's my business—and then I'll be off to Paris and find Bancroft, and I'll say a word or two to him that won't do any harm before you come."

As usual, Mr. Foxwell was as good as his word. He saw his wife about half-past eight and told her while she drank her chocolate what Jenny and he had resolved.

"The girl's right, Mother," he concluded. "She's sure she wants Bancroft, and she has done with Lord Favershall; so there's no use kicking about it. He had no weight, anyway. I told her she must write to him or

see him, and she's willing to do it. Now what would you wish?"

Confronted with this new situation, Mrs. Foxwell took it very well. Her self-confidence had grown with experience; she realized now that with her wealth she could have any position she liked in London without help from Jenny, and, as soon as she understood this, her interest in Jenny's marriage vanished.

"I mean to live in London," she said. "We have our own friends here, and we can have a good time. I guess everybody thinks more of us here than they did in New York, and if Jenny chooses to be silly—why, we can only make the best of it. How long will you be away?"

"I can't say for certain," he replied casually, and there the matter ended.

His next piece of work was not so simple. The English bank said that they could not give Mr. Bancroft's address to anyone without instructions, and Mr. Foxwell immediately prepared for the journey. He crossed in the club train that afternoon, and went straight to his rooms at Meurice's. Nothing was known there of Mr. Bancroft, and nothing had been seen of him at the garage. But Mr. Foxwell slept the sleep of the just; he had unbounded confidence in the power of money to solve all such difficulties.

At ten o'clock next morning he was with his Ambassador, and in another hour that gentleman had taken him and presented him in person to the chief of the Paris police. Five minutes afterward he left the office con-

siderably disappointed; Bancroft's address was unknown, his name was not on the police books.

Without delay Mr. Foxwell wired the fact to Jenny, and then betook himself to the Latin Quarter. There, if anywhere, he would hear of a student with an automobile. Days passed and ran into weeks—two weeks, to be exact—before he found a trace of the American. At length he secured his address, and called upon him without more ado.

Bancroft was surprised to see him—surprised almost out of the possibility of controlling himself. He had waited so long, so long, and now—his heart jumped and his breath caught.

"How are you?" began Mr. Foxwell. "How are you getting on with the book?"

"Slowly learning to write," cried Bancroft. "But how did you find me?"

"By your automobile," replied Mr. Foxwell. "The police knew nothing about you—had not even got your name."

"I took these rooms from an American named Cosgrave," laughed Bancroft, cheerfully. "But now you're here, you must come out and have a Latin Quarter lunch."

Mr. Foxwell accepted the proposal, and unbent so that it seemed as if they were men of the same age. He had felt at once that Bancroft was braced in resolution, and knew that the best way to find out his real feeling was to go about with him unbuttoned, so to speak, and

as a comrade. Mr. Foxwell's knowledge of men was both wide and deep; he was capable of suppleness on occasion, and was as adroit in dealing with persons as in handling affairs.

It was not till after lunch and coffee that he ventured to put a direct question to Bancroft.

"Why have you shut yourself up here and given us no news of yourself?"

"I've been working hard."

"I suppose you guess," said Mr. Foxwell, with his usual directness, "that I've come as an ambassador? Jenny'll be over in Paris to-morrow, and she wants to see you. Will you come to Meurice's, say, at six, to meet her?"

Bancroft shook his head, and, as he saw the father frown, he said:

"Don't mistake me. I would go anywhere to meet Miss Jenny, but it would be better, I think, to let her come to me. I don't know whether you can allow that, but I'm saying it in kindness to her. She sent me away. She ought to come to me, if she wants me."

"That's all very well," replied Mr. Foxwell, "logical and right enough; but, if I were you, I'd be illogical and generous in this case. She has come back in sending me to you, taken it all back, and that's not easy for a girl like Jenny. Meet her at the hotel and give her a pleasant surprise. I should say meet her at the station, but that's no place to talk. I'll meet her there."

"You're right," cried Bancroft. "I'll be there."

Mr. Foxwell was rejoiced to see that his whole face lit up as he spoke, and his eyes were glowing. He pleased the father so that Mr. Foxwell unbent, and, contrary to his habit, spoke freely:

"You've got about as good a chance of happiness," he said, "as a man could have in this world. Let me say a word to you: Jenny's not easy to manage; she has high temper and brains and resolution, a handful for any man——"

"What about Lord Favershall?" Bancroft couldn't help interrupting.

"Oh, pshaw!" cried Mr. Foxwell; "Lord Favershall never had a chance, anyway. He isn't Jenny's class," he went on seriously. "She's got temperament and brains. Be loving and generous to her, and she'll not disappoint you. Always give in to her; at least that would be my plan—she'll not take advantage. If you can stand a whole pile of love," he added humorously, "more than most men want, you'll be all right, I reckon. And it looks to me as if you could," he concluded, shaking the young man by the hand cordially.

Bancroft smiled at the analysis, which seemed to him very sound, and accompanied Mr. Foxhall to his car.

The truth was that he had to exercise some self-control to let Mr. Foxwell go away by himself; he wanted to go with him just to hear him talk of Jenny, mention her name. He was wild to hear about her and what she had done; how she had come to the great decision. He could have shouted with delight, his whole resolute

nature was in mad ebullition, like molten iron. As soon as the cold water of doubt fell hissing, it was simply dissolved into a bubble of air by the fervid heat. Jenny was coming, Jenny loved him, Jenny——. His very soul was jubilant, thankful. What a hell of a time he had had—a hell of misery!

How long he had waited—more than two months—without a word! At first, he couldn't help building on a quick reconciliation, and he spent all his leisure in remembering their love-passages, conjuring Jenny up before him, recalling her words and looks, her rare gestures, her little hands, her astounding courage and frankness. Was anyone else ever so frank and so articulate? He soon discovered that this dwelling on Jenny's qualities was not the way to forget her and do his work. He had to put her out of his mind, and he did it; but, alas! he found that his success crippled him. When he didn't think of her, the meaning went out of life, the warmth out of the sunshine; he sat about in misery, unable to work, incapable of thought or effort. He must either go out, meet his fellow students and talk, or else read. He soon came to prefer reading, and spent his days with Balzac and the French novelists. But, after all, the life of books was only half a life, and in the intervals of reading he suffered desperately, and reproached himself again and again. Why did he meet Berthe? What did she matter, anyway? Why had he let Jenny go? He raged against himself. But his purpose held: he would not write. He knew it was better. And now the long

misery was over—happily ended. Joy came into his eyes at thought of her,—Jenny—the delightful witch!

He set to work to picture her. Bit by bit he went over her loveliness, as a miser gloats over each piece of gold, fingering her neck and waist, drawing her slowly into his arms, holding her lithe figure against him, studying the spirit through the eyes, kissing the child-lips till they took on the bruised purple hue of woman's passion. Jenny—the maddening, imperious sweetheart—would she be subdued now, or just as dominant as ever? She wouldn't have changed a whit—no one ever does change. Individual character is indestructible.

He went out at length and walked the sun down the sky; and the stars lit up the heavens, and a thin, sickle moon came out with strong promise of growth. As he returned at length to bed, "Never," he said to himself, "never was anyone so utterly happy and eager—Jenny!"

CHAPTER XXVII

WHEN Jenny met her father at the station she was outwardly cool and reserved, inwardly all tremor, excitement, and gasping hope. One glance at his strong face set her thrilling; it was all right, she felt. The questions streamed:

"Was he glad? Well? Shall I see him to-night?"

"I guess so," was the sufficient answer.

"Oh, you dear! Oh!"

The lift stopped at the third floor. She asked:

"The same rooms?"

He nodded and opened the door of the sitting-room, and, as she went in, closed it gently, shutting them in together.

The surprise for Jenny was overpowering. Before she could see Bancroft properly she was taken into his arms.

"Honey flower!" he cried, and without thought their lips met.

"Don't speak," he said a few moments later.

"You are taking the pain out of my heart."

After a while some lines came into his head and he repeated them:

. . . . . .

After long grief and pain
To find the arms of my true love
Around me once again.

"I'm all dusty," said Jenny, flushing; "not fit to be seen!"

"Fit to be eaten," he cried, laughing. "Don't talk nonsense; you're as dainty as ever, and I'm not going to let you go for hours."

"Have you learned the lesson, Jenny?" he asked, after another series of embracings, "made up your mind that you do love me?"

She nodded her head, and the deep eyes were lit now from within.

"Ah!" she said, with a sigh of content. "I'm——" and she smiled.

"Not eloquent!" he replied with a wry face.

"I'll talk later," she said, "when the waves of feeling have settled down a little. I have lots to say. Why didn't you write to me?"

"How could I?" he asked. "You turned me out. How could I answer your suspicions about Berthe? It was all so unjust, so wrong. It was up to you to make the first move."

"You've not seen her since!" She didn't put it as a question, and was satisfied with the shake of the head he gave in reply. "Mother thought she saw you driving her about," she explained.

"The wish called up the vision," he replied, smiling. "Now there'll be no more doubts?" he asked.

"Many, sir," she answered saucily; "for I love you."

Again he took her in his arms.

Jenny and Bancroft always thought they had only

been a few minutes together when there was a knock at the door and Mr. Foxwell came in.

"Time for dinner," he cried. "Go and put yourself straight, Jenny; we'll wait for you," he added. And she went.

"Glad you came to the hotel?" he questioned.

"Sure," smiled Bancroft joyously; "heart glad. You're a good counsellor!"

When Jenny returned they went in to dinner, and after dinner Mr. Foxwell left them together again. Jenny praised her father and described London life, but Bancroft brought her back to her own feelings and insisted on a full confession. Jenny was astonishingly frank—as frank as a child might have been, if a child could have been gifted with her power of vivid speech.

"What made you realize that you loved me?" he probed; "or, at least, made you realize that you preferred love to position and influence and title?"

"It would be too long to tell you all the steps," said Jenny. "I'd have to go right back to the beginning, when we first met. I'll tell you it all some day."

"Now, please!" pleaded Bancroft.

"Some day," she said; "but now I'll tell you just the last steps while they are fresh in my memory. You were too masterful," she said; "your influence simply obliterated my individuality, and I resented this, and used to say to myself that, unless you loved me with all your heart, I should be very unhappy with you. Then came the Berthe thing, and it seemed to show me clearly

that you didn't love me really. I never found it hard before to believe that a man loved me. Perhaps I never wanted anyone to so much; but I really doubted your love, and so I made up my mind to obey my reason.

"I had always been right in the past when I did that, so I thought I might be again. I went over to London determined to give in to Lord Favershall, and, at first, it was all very nice. But gradually I saw how shallow and small that life was, and, when he wanted me to try to love him, and kissed me——" Jenny burst out laughing; "I couldn't stand his kisses. Besides, he was a fool. Any man's a fool who asks a girl to try to love him, instead of making her love him. It came over me like a wave. I couldn't stand the life! I couldn't stand the man. I wanted you," and she put her hands up to his head and pulled his face down to hers and gave him her heart with her lips.

"I knew I loved you," she went on gravely, "when I sent my father over to you. But when he wired me that you couldn't be found—oh, then I fell into love. There's all the difference between being in love and loving. I fell into love as if I stood against a parapet and leaned and leaned, and it suddenly gave way, and I fell and was lost. I went about like someone hurt to death. I couldn't bear to speak or be spoken to, and yet I could not endure to be alone, and all the while words of yours and caresses of yours would come back to me and make me burn and throb. Oh, I wanted you! And at night the desire would go mad; the thoughts of you were

like your lips and caressing fingers; they drove me crazy. And behind all was the deadly fear that I had lost you, that you had gone back to America. Oh, falling in love like that is dreadful!"

"You delight!" he cried. "It was the same thing with me, you know, when, after the Romanche, your father told me you were engaged to Favershall, and I thought I had been deceiving myself. The feeling that I had lost you taught me how much I cared. That was the lesson I wanted you to learn; I'm glad you have learned it." And he took her in his arms again.

A moment later she drew herself away.

"But, you know," she went on, "you might have taught me as well without that awful fortnight of dread. Here, when I quarrelled with you about Berthe, you should have *made* me do what you wanted. I fell in love through fear of losing you, but you could have made me love you just as much without the fear. You should have come and taken me in your arms and kissed me and said 'Damn Berthe!' as you can say it. I'd have laughed, and loved you and adored you for *making* me. You are very wise in love's ways; but you don't know women altogether, you dear. Often a woman wants to be *made* to do something that she wants to do."

"Oh, you darling!" he cried. "What a revelation! What a fool I've been! It's as if you took a light and showed me the inner recesses of your heart, you darling woman! Do tell me all about it; tell me what you first

felt, long ago when we first met. I loved you at once, you know. I thought you charming the first day——"

"I did not love you at all at first," she replied. "I had some curiosity, and the curiosity became excitement, through your new ideas, new phrases, new outlook on life—excitement that grew and grew till it became intoxication, and I began to get annoyed with such a preoccupation of my spirit. . . .

"There is a patchwork of scenes in my mind. The dog incident taught me that you were resolute and kind, but too masterful; the snow at the Col d'Allos showed me how unselfish, how good-humored you could be. All the time the fascination was growing, I think. Then, in the Valley of the Romanche our eyes got entangled, and I knew we wanted each other. Oh, the excitement of it, and the throbbing desire!

"Then your coldness and your drawing away. I don't know why, but I decided at once that you were married or entangled in some way, and I set myself against you. You see, I knew so little about you really. I drew into my shell. But all the time I was extraordinarily conscious of you sitting there beside me. Again and again I noticed your hands before me—wonderfully expressive, dear hands. I knew you could touch one exquisitely.

"I had to try to discover faults in you. I didn't want you, anyway, I decided; you were far too imperious. I should never be happy with you. You would be intolerable if you didn't love me with all your heart, and you didn't, or you wouldn't have drawn away.

"Suddenly I understood that they had told you I was engaged, and I was angry with the lie that separated us, and angry with you for believing it. . . .

"Then came the railway accident. I hated myself because I had such pleasure when you handled me so roughly. I thrilled as you held me down. Oh, you know it all! I have been loving you more and more all the time, and yet the love grew by strides, and this last was the fatal event. You must never again let me fear I've lost you; that's unbearable. We will quarrel just for the joy of making it up again—just to let me hear the deep, tender notes in your voice. But the thought of losing you is too dreadful," and she shivered a little.

"You blessed darling!" he said.

"But now for your confession," she cried. "What have you been thinking about these last two months without me? Quite happy, eh?"

"Fifty things that would all please you," he replied; "but take just these two: I've been reproaching myself for even speaking to that spiteful Berthe, and I've been hating my hands because they left me so ignorant of your beauty, hating my lips because they only knew your mouth. Are you satisfied? . . . Now, where are we to go for our honeymoon, you honey flower?"

"Where would you like to go?" she said, looking up at him. "Now I shall see how much you know of love, how much you love me."

"I want to go foot by foot over it all again," he cried;

"Paris and Fontainebleau and Vergy and Vezelay and the Romanche—how the names sing themselves to me! I have a confession to make about Vergy," he added. "When you got up on the boulder to look down the valley, I held your dress for fear that you should fall and it outlined your figure, and I grew blind with desire to touch you."

"You did touch me," she said, smiling at him. "You did, too, in the car more than once."

He gasped with astonishment.

"You noticed, then?"

"You boy!" she said, kissing him. "Of course I noticed; a girl always notices such things. We are all looking out for such signs of love. The first time I thought it might be chance, but afterward I knew it was on purpose, and, as it was on purpose, I felt that you desired me. That made me glad, pierced me with sharp thrills of sex."

The confession intensified his passion. He took her in his arms again and began to let his kisses linger on her lips and neck. . . .

Suddenly Jenny woke up to the time and place.

"I must be a sight," she said, going over to the glass, "with burning face and hair all about my ears."

"And shining eyes," he said, coming and putting his arms round her waist from behind and drawing her to him again.

"Please not!" she cried. "Father may be in at any moment, and I don't want him to think me quite mad.

I want to keep our secrets so secret. They are ten times sweeter so." And she turned her head slowly round and laid her eyes on his.

Then suddenly she exclaimed:

"By the way, I had almost forgotten: I have one question to ask you that's been puzzling me for months. Do you remember, at Versailles, saying that my lips were expressive and told you more than I could guess? What did you mean by that? It has puzzled me again and again!"

He laughed a little.

"Sometimes, dear, your lips are ordinary. I kiss them and kiss and all of a sudden they are glowing hot. Then I know that——" And he broke off as she kissed him, exclaiming:

"Now my cheeks are hot. I understand."

"Oh, you darling!" he began. "With such serious eyes and expressive lips, all your secrets—secrets of your body and your soul—will be given to me—all—not one withheld."

"Oh, dear me!" she sighed impatiently. "I want to be cunning in love's ways, as you are. How am I to win to such knowledge?"

Bancroft laughed.

"You have it already, you witch; you must know you have."

"Are you sure?" she asked.

"Sure, sure!" he replied. "A woman knows so much better what a man feels and wants. And what you

don't know, you'll learn easily; love'll teach you. It's always accepted that love is a sort of divine gift, but that isn't true. Love must be won, just as money is won, or anything else in life; and, like money, too, it is even harder to keep than to win. You and I will pay the price for it always, won't we?"

A little later Mr. Foxwell came in and insisted that Jenny must have a rest. To-morrow, too, was another day, and they could talk over things at breakfast.

When they met before the breakfast Jenny confessed to Bancroft that she was very shy of him.

"Ridiculous," she said, "and delicious, but I'm filled with it. Why, I don't know, because in reality I'm not at all frightened. The shyness must come from generations of girls before me, who were wooed without ceremony."

"Do you know," he cried, "your frankness and your understanding delight me; they give me spasms of admiration for you; you make life incomparably richer to me. I seem ignorant beside you."

She laughed joyously and took his hand and went with him to the table. They had decided that they would be married at once. Mr. Foxwell saw nothing against it. But, when they told him about the honeymoon in the car, he laughed outright.

"I was wondering," he said, "where you would take a house. I bought that place between St. Cloud and Versailles, because it's really close to Paris, and high up among pines and very healthy. If you would like that,

I will convey it right over to you, and put it in order for you as well, if you wish. I thought of keeping some horses there. They might amuse you."

"Oh, do!" cried Jenny. "That would be fine. You must stay with us, you know, at least half the time, and you would be lost if you had to live without winning something every year. But I want to furnish our house myself, and arrange your rooms in it, too, Father," she added. "I know what you like."

Mr. Foxwell nodded, smiling.

"I'm afraid a little," he said, "that my company may tire you. My philosophy of life is rather saddening, you know, and I don't want to kill your enthusiasms."

"Oh, you can't do that!" exclaimed Bancroft. "Things you say often shed light to me."

"Well, I sometimes think," resumed the old man, his eyes getting strangely meditative, "that I see the calculation in the world, the adaptation of means to ends; because that's what I am best able to see in it. But I see that all the time. I heard a man the other day complaining that he hadn't a friend on earth, and I couldn't help grinning. He had never given any friendship in his life to anybody; how could he expect friendship? We get what we give in this world, reap what we sow. If you give love and kindness, you will harvest some love and kindness. If you give nothing, you'll get nothing. Nobody can cheat much. . . .

"My motto in this world has always been: 'Get what

you want.' You won't be happy even if you do get it, but there is a certain satisfaction in succeeding."

Bancroft noticed for the fiftieth time the bony, hard chin and clamping jaws.

"I'll be with you a good deal if you'll have me, and I'll amuse myself with my racehorses. They're a lot kinder than men, and I love winning with them. They know all about it as well as we do. Your mother won't want me much. I guess she'll be all right over there in London as long as the bills are paid. She'll get to talk English slang with an English accent strong enough to skate on. She's hard at it already," and he laughed heartily.

"She'll be happy," he went on, "for she'll always be striving. She can't give dinners in Buckingham Palace, so she'll always have something to look forward to; Lucky Mamie!"

* * * * *

A couple of months later Jenny and Bancroft were returning to Paris, and had stopped at Beaune to visit the Hostel Dieu once again.

"We mustn't let our happiness," said Bancroft, "prevent us from making tours like this often in the future. You haven't yet made up your mind what you are going to do, have you?"

"Not yet," replied Jenny. "It's better to be just a pair of lovers for a moon of moons. I'm so glad we resolved to let nothing interfere with our love till we had made up our minds what we should both do."

"Not only till we had made up our minds," said Bancroft, "but till we had done something worth doing in the world. I am writing a bit of my book every day; it'll be finished by the time we get to Paris. And, meanwhile, your father is establishing those prizes in American universities for women law students and women students of medicine. That will make such a difference. Wasn't it good of him to take hold at once and put the matter in hand? He's a great man, you know."

"Yes," said Jenny; "but at bottom very sad. He believes in nothing—nothing at all. He has never been happy as we are—never. He thinks money, health and youth the only good things in life. Poor Daddy!"

"Is it youth or our love," said Bancroft, "that makes me sure the world's all developing, unfolding like a flower to some ineffable fruition?"

"I don't know," she said. "But your enthusiasms have infected me, too. Do you know," she added, "the most curious thing in our love is that I thought our marriage would be the great stride and it wasn't. There have been far greater since—two or three greater."

"Tell me one," he said, leaning towards her and putting his hands on her neck, to draw her head to him.

"One yesterday," she said in a low voice. "I told you at the time—you sweetheart!"

CHAPTER XXVIII

WHEN the pair reached the hotel in Paris they found that Mr. Foxwell had done his best to welcome them; he had made of his daughter's sitting room a bower of roses. She found, too, a note from him saying that he hoped if they were not too tired, they would dine with him in his room at the hotel at eight o'clock. They accepted at once. Bancroft as he said, because Mr. Foxwell would know all that was going on; Jenny because she wanted her father's opinion on something that lay near her heart.

The truth is she had been tormented all that last day coming to Paris by an exclamation of Bancroft, a confession of his desire to see Paris, and now his casual remark, that they should all dine together because Mr. Foxwell would be able to tell them the news of the town, confirmed her suspicion and stirred again a sort of deposit of fear which lay like mud in the bottom of Jenny's soul.

Mr. Foxwell had a good deal to tell them. He had grown interested in building his house on the heights above Versailles, and especially in the stables. He wanted his daughter's opinion on some things, and he asked her to come out on the morrow to lunch with him.

"I don't ask you," he said, turning to Bancroft, "because you have enough to do getting your things together and making up your mind whether you like the little apartment I have taken for you both provisionally in the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne. My horses and your books both need undivided attention."

In the talk after dinner which was prolonged until nearly midnight Mr. Foxwell told Bancroft all he wanted to know and incidentally told Jenny about her mother and her social campaign in London. When they separated and Jenny went to her room she couldn't help noticing that her father, without being asked, had brought about a meeting with her alone.

"Did he know I wanted a talk with him?" she asked herself, and resolved, woman-like, to find out on the morrow, without first telling him that she had wanted to get his advice on a matter of extraordinary interest.

Before Bancroft went about his business in the morning he insisted on taking his wife out to the apartment which Mr. Foxwell had taken for them. They found it was quite close to the Arc de Triomphe, on the second floor. All the chief rooms, the sitting room, library and dining room gave on the avenue and looked out over the trees and green lawns to the fashionable thoroughfare; but all the sleeping rooms lay at the back, with windows to the south, and were for Paris, extraordinarily quiet, as they saw into a courtyard which Mr. Foxwell's money had transformed into a little garden. Bancroft was ten times more pleased with his surroundings than Jenny.

He had no conception before of what unlimited money would do, even in a short time. The apartment was ready for habitation: the little library only needed books, the dining room, with its Chippendale sideboard, table and chairs, the salon, which was pure Empire (Jenny had asked for that), the bedrooms, the bathrooms—what Mr. Foxwell called the rough furnishing of the apartment was perfect, superbly arranged. It needed only Jenny's feminine touches to give the place that air of individuality which turns a lodging into a home.

It was nearly twelve o'clock before Jenny had made out a list of the things she most wanted and Bancroft undertook to get them all in an hour or two; he then put his wife into an automobile and sent her off to her lunch with her father. She found Mr. Foxwell waiting for her in the hotel at Versailles.

"Are we going out to see your house?" she began.

"First of all, we'll have lunch," he said, "and then I'll take you out there."

"What did you want to talk to me about?" she asked directly.

He smiled. "I thought you might have things you wanted to ask me," he said, with his usual slow deliberation.

"I'm beginning to see," replied his daughter, looking at him intently, "that you're exceedingly clever; more observant than one would imagine or more intuitive perhaps?"

Mr. Foxwell smiled.

"Let us have our lunch first," he said, "and then you shall question me." But long before the lunch was over Jenny's impatience had broken the ice. Her father gave her the opportunity:

"I don't need to ask you whether you've enjoyed yourself," he said. "I saw that in your faces at once; he's a real fellow, is Bancroft."

"He is indeed," she replied warmly.

"Happy, happier, happiest?" questioned Mr. Foxwell.

"Happiest!" replied Jenny eagerly, as if to convince herself. "Absolutely happy, happier than I ever thought it possible to be; but . . ."

Mr. Foxwell's smile vanished and his eyes were like drill-points.

"There's always a 'but,' I reckon!"

"I don't know whether I ought to mention the 'but'; it's so tiny," she began, "it may be imaginary: often I think it is. But my happiness is so perfect I want to keep it always. We are so absolutely in love with each other, he is so wonderful that I want to preserve even the glamour of love always, and I can't help knowing that one meets other married couples, even young married couples, and the glamour has gone. The husband speaks indifferently to his wife; she turns lack-luster eyes upon him; oh, it's just dreadful," she broke off. "'Can't we keep our Eden, Eve or I?'"

The father looked at her with the intent gray eyes:

"What's the serpent?"

"There isn't any serpent," she replied nervously. "It's

just a fear that comes in spite of myself—a doubt rather, so slight that I'm almost ashamed of telling it even to you."

"Tell it all the same," he said. "Pull it into the light. Perhaps it won't be so frightful when you see it clearly."

"It's just this," she began. "When I proposed on the last morning to stay the whole day in Fontainebleau because we had had a beautiful time in the forest before, a wonderful hour, Morton cried out: 'We had better get to Paris; we've wired, you know'; and then he went on explaining: 'Your father will be expecting us, and I don't want to drive over the *pavé* in the dark; the last twenty miles are bad and will tire you.'

"I was a tiny bit hurt and disappointed, and I said: 'I didn't know you liked Paris so much'; and then I remembered that you, Daddy, were just the same and wanted to drive straight through to Paris, do you remember? We made over two hundred miles that last day.

"Morton said, just like you, 'Great capitals draw one; they have the heady wine of life. . . .'

"Now, I didn't want Paris. I feared any change; I would have stayed in Fontainebleau a year if he had been willing. I only wanted him. You see," she broke off, "my 'but' is nothing, and yet——"

"Is that all?" Mr. Foxwell asked quietly.

"Not quite all," she went on. "When I read your note yesterday asking us to dine, he exclaimed: 'That's good, your father'll tell us all the news,' and he was all anima-

tion and excitement. Yes, he was delighted to dine with you and not with me alone."

"I'm glad the 'but' is no bigger," said Mr. Foxwell, smiling. "Most brides have a more formidable one. But how can I help you? What do you want to know?"

"What to do, father?" she cried. "Scold me, tell me what I have done wrong. You've often said, 'No one comes to grief except those who cannot think or are too weak to act on their insight.' Teach me what to do, I'll learn. When we went away Morton would have left any one for me; he couldn't spend enough time with me; now he is eager to meet you, eager to get to Paris, eager to 'smell the *pavé*,' as he said; eager to see about his old books—oh, I could scream! Is he tired of me? I can bear anything but the doubt."

"I'll tell you anything I can, but these sex problems cannot be solved by telling. What do you want to know exactly?"

"Is he tired?"

The father smiled.

"You've said he is and as you don't like to believe it, it's probably true."

Her face blanched, and her voice fell to a slow toneless whisper.

"You don't know how dreadful that is; my heart just stopped."

"Don't make it worse than it is," said her father soothingly. "Tiredness passes off quickly."

"No, no," she cried, "let us make it worse than it is,

much worse," and then as if resolved, "he is tired, I'm sure; there are dark shadows underneath his eyes: he's often weary—oh!"

Her father nodded his head.

"I guess that's it; I guess it's physiology, not psychology, you've got to study——"

"What do you mean now!" she exclaimed, breathlessly, as if eager to catch the words before they came from his mouth.

"I mean," said Mr. Foxwell, "that he is physically tired—not tired of you."

"Oh!" Jenny exclaimed as if the thought were new to her. "What am I to do then? Tell me everything! I'm sick of ignorance."

Mr. Foxwell began as if picking his words.

"Men and women, you see, are different. . . . We are all made up of body, heart and soul, I guess; but the heart counts for more in women, and perhaps the body and mind in men. Now, suppose your husband is physically tired. Keep away from him; go out to operas and theaters with him; interest his mind; be like a man companion to him; make him talk; don't agree with him; contradict him whenever you are sure you're right."

"Oh, I cannot," she broke in; "he knows so much more than I do; he'd see I was making a fool of myself."

"You don't take me right," said her father. "There will be shades of difference between you from the beginning. A girl is apt to suppress herself and keep those

differences in the background; she tries to ignore and forget them; she wants to worship her lover—mind and all, to grow like him. That's a mistake. You just pull the differences out and exaggerate them, those differences will excite his mind and please his intelligence in the long run more than slavish agreement. Men and women don't fit by being like but complementary—lock and key."

"I see what you mean," cried Jenny, "but, oh, how heavy my heart is; that I should have tired him makes my heart ache; I can't breathe; that I should have to scheme to keep him; I feel as if I'd rather give right up."

"That's not like you, Jenny," Mr. Foxwell threw in. "You're both young. In three days he will want you as much as ever. The way to keep an appetite is not to overfeed it. You must just be wise for both. . . ."

Jenny nodded her head to show she understood and her father went on:

"Everything that's worth having in this world has to be fought for, I guess, and just in proportion to its value the fight is difficult. If you want to keep your husband the passionate lover of a month ago make yourself rare. Take the opportunity of this change to Paris, show even more interest than he takes in the intellectual life of Paris, in the shows, in the art, in your house, in everything. . . ."

"I understand," she said dubiously, "but it will be hard."

"Of course it will," replied Mr. Foxwell. "Dreadfully

hard. Everything worth having is hard to get, and generally what's hard to get is harder still to keep."

"Dear me," she said, "how you frighten and yet excite me. I think I see; I think I know what you mean."

"And when you get your passionate lover back again," Mr. Foxwell went on, "don't make the common mistake and fill his mouth with honey. . . . Make him conquer you every time anew; win you every day or so afresh."

"I see," she said slowly, "you wise father; but it's hard to withhold what one longs to give?"

The father smiled.

"That's just it. The Germans have a sort of proverb —*'entweder—oder'* (either—or) which means you cannot have your cake and eat it. By eating a little at a time you can keep your cake for years, perhaps forever. That's the moral of it all," he added reflectively.

"I've often thought," he began again, "of what they're calling to-day sex-antagonism; there's no such thing really. There used to be a sort of antagonism in the past between the ideas of mother and mistress. Now in modern times there is a sort of antagonism between the ideas of companion and mistress and the girl who wants to be a real wife should learn to be both."

"How are we to learn?" she cried; "the mistress part is easy; the companion part is difficult."

Mr. Foxwell smiled.

"The mistress part is difficult, too, Jenny. To play any part superbly is very hard."

"What do you mean?" she cried. "Oh, go on, talk as if I were a man, dot the i's and cross the t's; for goodness sake. I must know everything. . . ."

"It's like this," Mr. Foxwell began. "A man has usually had experiences. He knows that some mistresses are better than others. It doesn't mean he must love best the best one. You understand? . . . In any case," he broke off, "you must just work it out for yourself. Ask yourself: why does the mother idea war against the mistress idea physically?"

"I see," said Jenny slowly, as if thinking; "there must be ways and means."

"Heaps of them; think of him always, not of yourself and your own pleasure, see?"

Jenny nodded her head. "I think I understand. You wise daddy! But is the companion part hard also?" she went on after a moment's pause.

"Sure," Mr. Foxwell replied, nodding. "Think of it. The body, after all, is a simple problem; but the mind's complex and more important and Bancroft has a good mind. It will make you work to get on a level with him, and you must win at least to equality. Now in the case of the body you have no such difficulty, no competition there except with others and his past and I guess his past hasn't been very lurid. If you can't beat all that comparison I don't know you."

"Must one always make oneself scarce and be hunted?" she asked. "Does love given freely never call forth love in a man?"

"Sure," replied Mr. Foxwell; "when you make up your mind to yield, give yourself with all your soul: you ought to try to leave him an incomparable memory; but never forget to make him conquer you every time afresh; love, too, is an art."

Jenny laughed delightedly.

"Oh, daddy, daddy, you ought to be a professor of the art of love at Bryn Mawr," and she laughed again mischievously, forcing him to join in.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE Bancrofts had settled down in Paris and Mrs. Bancroft, encouraged by her father, had begun to get a special set about her: unlike most married women she affected girls and young men and had them in her house frequently. She gave theater parties, too, and parties at her father's place, where they talked horses and sport. She had some of all sorts among her friends; two or three men-of-letters; a few of the younger artists; some politicians (a rising deputy could not see enough of her)—all people of a certain distinction.

The mornings were kept sacred. Bancroft worked in the library till noon and his wife attended to her private affairs; at one o'clock they met for lunch and after that the hours were spent together in visits or excursions or receptions. It was nearly three months before she again sought a private talk with her father.

"I want your advice again," she began.

"Really!" he exclaimed. "It seems to me you have learned your lesson all right: your husband is keen enough now; I guess you have nothing more to fear."

"When we talked last," Jenny began seriously, "I thought the companion part was easy, but I find it hard. Morton has read everything; I'm an ignorant fool in comparison."

Mr. Foxwell smiled:

"Then tell him so, sit at his feet and learn: that'll please him just as well."

"That's just what I've been doing," Jenny pouted; "but, as you said, there must be some equality in companionship; I want ideas of my own that he can't smile out of existence at once."

Mr. Foxwell nodded his head:

"Read, then, Jenny, and talk. Read what you like best and don't force yourself to read what he or any one else says you ought to like. Don't be frightened; your personality will come through all right. The Golden Rule is: 'Never pretend to know what you don't know'—that's the pitfall of clever women. . . . Study everything that touches you; but above all hear all the music you can. I guess you'll get ahead of him first in music," he added meditatively.

"Must I get ahead of him?" she asked dolefully.

"He's ahead of you in many things; you should be ahead of him in one in order to be his equal," her father went on: "great love's only possible among equals. He must think you worth convincing whenever you differ. He must respect your intelligence—reverence you—or his love will be lacking in the finest part of love——"

"He'll never reverence me!" she exclaimed, "I'm so ignorant."

"Don't be afraid," he replied, "whatever one desires intensely in life, one's apt to get; if one's willing to pay for it," he added thoughtfully.

"Who made you so wise, father?" she asked abruptly: "what woman, I mean? It wasn't mother!"

"No, indeed!" he exclaimed so abruptly that they both laughed.

"Tell me about her," Jenny went on softly. "I always felt that there was some woman in your life or you'd never have been so understanding, so sympathetic with me!"

Mr. Foxwell looked at her.

"It's true," he said, "we're more like real chums than father and daughter; but what's the good of talking about the past——"

"It'll teach me," replied Jenny. "I'm getting ambitious; every little victory leads to another struggle. I mean to make my marriage a great success."

"You've made it a success," said her father.

"I don't mean a success of three months," she went on. "I want much more than that. If it takes two to make a quarrel, one can make a heaven and I mean to make it: so tell me, please," she coaxed.

"There's not much to tell," he began. "It was a few years after you were born; your mother spent most of her time in bed and in doing herself up; she began to wash her face with grease, she called it cream and I didn't like the taste of it," and he laughed. ". . . Besides, I had my work.

"One afternoon I noticed a girl in the subway; when we got out uptown 'twas a regular blizzard, and she stopped short, looking out on the blinding snow. My

car was waiting; I lifted my hat and offered to take her home. She wouldn't consent at first, but I laughed at her silly scruples. That's how it began. She was a school teacher, proud as Lucifer. I sent her books, then theater tickets; she loved the theater. I was very much taken up with my business, trying to make a million and not a few thousands. . . .

"At length I got into a big deal and told her about it; I had often been surprised by her intuition. She asked me to bring the men and let her meet them at dinner. I did. She warned me at once against my partner.

" 'He's jealous of you,' she said. 'You must have hurt his vanity, and vanity's stronger than self-interest.'

"She was right. He went back on me badly; but her warning had put me on my guard and I was grateful to her—very; pitied her, too. I insisted on settling $100,000 on her—a tenth of what she had helped me to gain. . . .

"As soon as she was independent she just told me straight out she loved me, had loved me a long time, was afraid I'd think it was for my money—she was a wonder," he added. "I learned all I know about women from her. I lived in heaven for ten years. . . ."

"Did she die?" Jenny asked softly.

Mr. Foxwell nodded his head.

"She was going to have a child. I had promised to get a divorce and marry her: I had begun proceedings."

"Mother never let on to me about that!" cried Jenny.

"Your mother only remembers her victories," Mr. Foxwell remarked dryly.

"Did mother ever know her? What was her name?" cried Jenny.

"Inez Vidal," replied Mr. Foxwell. "Her father was half a Spaniard, her mother American."

"Did mother ever know her?" persisted Jenny.

"She knew of her," replied Mr. Foxwell. "When I tried for a divorce. I don't think she ever met her. Inez used to come to the office a good deal; we often drove out together, but your mother was lost in that society whirl and we were content to be with each other."

"How you must have suffered when she died!" said Jenny.

Her father nodded his head.

"It was the business that kept me alive," he remarked. "Then you came back from school and helped."

"It was from Inez you got your sympathy?"

"Suffering," he replied, "teaches a lot."

"I think you're very good and wise," said Jenny, "and I'm a fool."

"No, no," cried her father. "I had a great teacher. I often think women are wiser than men, especially in the things that matter in life. Men never begin to know how good a woman who loves them can be till they've lost her. We often hurt a woman's little vanities even when we love her, and a woman who loves us never hurts our vanities—never."

Jenny laughed.

"You know, daddy, you're fairer-minded than any one I ever met; fairer even than Morton."

"He's young," replied the father. "Don't forget that. He's got a good head. He may do something big yet. Give him lots of praise. Put the highest standard on him, but praise him, encourage him. We don't grow by blame and fear, see?"

His daughter smiled at him.

"I see, but my praise isn't worth much yet. I'm not his equal. But I'm not your daughter for nothing. I'm going to try my best."

"You'll find your judgment is sounder than his," said her father, "when you know half as much. You'll see things he misses and that'll give you self-confidence."

"Did the child live?" Jenny asked inconsequently.

The father shook his head.

"Oh, you poor daddy! I wish I could make it up to you. Did you never try again?"

"Inez made it hard for any other woman to take her place," he replied simply. "Now and again I went out to dinner or for a drive with some one else, but it wasn't the same. No companionship and very little pleasure, I guess. . . . I've had the best that life can give," he added. "I'm satisfied!"

"What a fool mother is!" cried Jenny. "What a fool!"

CHAPTER XXX

A library in a house in New York in East Seventy-fifth Street, five years later. Bancroft and Jenny alone in the room talking.

"I CAN'T get the book right," said Bancroft. "It's sure to be a frost. Even the publisher sees it isn't good enough. What can I do with it?"

"Drop it, dear, and rest a little," Jenny answered. "You have been working too hard; you've written a book a year; it's too much. You should lie fallow for a while."

"I dare say you're right," Bancroft replied, "but I'm puzzled; there are good things in the book. At any rate, the love is real, for I have put some of my love for you in it, and that gives it life."

"Why not put more, then?" Jenny looked up, smiling. "Why not put it all in? Our honeymoon has come to an end with this (showing a little garment she had been sewing). We are old married folk now; not lovers any more after five years; so the story may be written."

"You absurd child," he said, coming over to her and kissing her hair softly. "We shall be lovers till the end," turning up her face. "I love to kiss you just as much as ever."

"That's what I wanted to hear," said Jenny simply.

"But do tell me what I am to do with this love-tale."

"I'll read it to-day and tell you if I can," Jenny replied; "but probably you are already on the track yourself!"

He shook his head dubiously.

"I always have to come to you when things go wrong."

. . . . . .

Six months later, Bancroft talking to his wife.

"Bush, the publisher, asked me to write a companion volume to this," Bancroft began; "he says it is sure to succeed. It was a great idea of yours to put in our love story."

Jenny contented herself with nodding her head.

"I've tried to keep the tale as near the truth as I could," Bancroft went on simply, "and, strange to say, the retrospect has taught me how much I owe to you. I wouldn't have believed it; you've taught me such a lot."

"I'm glad," Jenny said simply.

"Do you remember telling me how you loved 'Diana of the Crossways?'" he remarked, "when I had tried to make fun of it at dinner. Our differences of taste always helped me; showed me there was another side or many other sides, and that was good for me, for us both," and he laughed joyously.

"But all that, sweet as it is, doesn't give me the end of the story?" she persisted.

"It just stops," he said. "I've retraced our travels, pictured moments in our growth, showed how our differences led us lovers to a sort of similarity till finally hand in hand we draw near the undiscovered country. . . .

"You were very ill, you know," he broke off. "when baby was born, and I didn't mean to outlive you: I was wondering continually whether the flickering gleams really merge themselves in a sea of light."

"Can you doubt it?" Jenny asked, stretching out her hand to him from the sofa, while looking over the great river towards the Palisades on the New Jersey shore.

"I've never really doubted it, I think . . ."

"We came out of the darkness," he replied, "and I always feel that we shall go to rest in it again; but you are probably nearer the truth than I am. In any case no one person is big enough to solve that problem—the last mystery to perplex humanity!"

THE END